

UCLA Faculty Association Blog: First Quarter 2024



Daniel J.B. Mitchell
@CalPolicy

Has any warned the 8,019,876,190th kid what the world is like? Be forewarned kiddo. You have no idea what you're getting into.

2024
HAPPY NEW YEAR

New Year's Day
U.S. population
335,893,238

World population
8,019,876,189

United States[®]
Census
Bureau

U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
[census.gov](https://www.census.gov)

Note: Population estimates as of Jan. 1, 2024.
Source: Vintage 2023 Population Estimates and International Database

Blog of UCLA Faculty Association, First Quarter 2024. Daniel J.B. Mitchell, blogger. All audio, video, and animated gifs are omitted. For originals, go to:
<https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/>

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Warning!

Monday, January 01, 2024



<https://twitter.com/CalPolicy/status/1741170164694225035>

Our Traditional New Year's Offering: The Fable of Successful Tobias

Monday, January 01, 2024



Or direct to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sn38xhd8swc>.

The French Revolution

Tuesday, January 02, 2024



Faithful blog readers will recall UC's long battle with commercial academic publisher Elsevier over the issue of cost and access to various journals. Eventually, a settlement was reached in 2021.* Nonetheless, the concerns persist. It seems the Sorbonne is leading the charge over this matter in Europe. From the Financial Times:

A leading French university has cancelled its contract with a commercial provider of academic data to switch to a non-profit rival, boosting a growing movement to make research available for free.

From January 1, the Sorbonne will work with OpenAlex, a recently developed service offering free online access to search and analytical tools for academics' publications, after dropping its longstanding partnership with Web of Science, owned by UK-based Clarivate.

The action is part of a wider pushback against the current model in academic publishing, where researchers publish and review papers for free but have to buy expensive subscriptions to the journals in which they are published to analyse data relating to their work. Thousands of researchers have turned to open-access platforms in recent years.

Élisabeth Angel-Perez, vice-president for research and innovation at the Sorbonne, which paid Clarivate \$51,000 this year, said the "radical decision" was designed to "reappropriate the results of research and to be in a position to regain control and ownership of what we produce".

Jason Priem, a founder of OpenAlex, said: "We felt there's a mismatch between the values of the academy and the shareholder boardroom. Research is fundamentally about sharing, while for-profits are fundamentally about capturing and enclosing." ...

Google Scholar provides some free information on academic publications including an index to measure the impact of authors' research, but only allows limited analysis or explanations of which articles it prioritises.

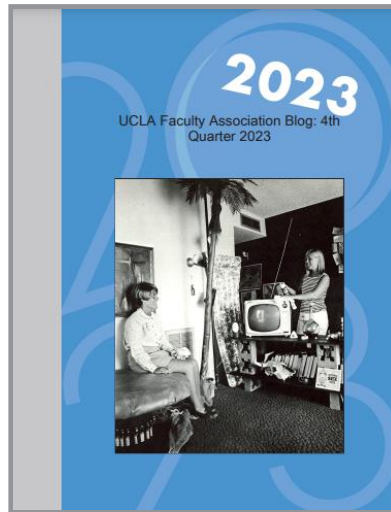
OpenAlex, which draws on a similar free service developed and then scrapped in 2021 by Microsoft Academic, already indexes 250mn articles. Launched in 2022, it is built with open-source software and funded primarily by Arcadia, a UK-based charitable fund.

Full story at <https://www.ft.com/content/89098b25-78af-4539-ba24-c770cf9ec7c3>. ===

* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2021/03/the-elsevier-deal.html>.

The Alternative

Tuesday, January 02, 2024



As we have done at the end of each calendar quarter, we again make available last quarter's blog in downloadable pdf form (or readable directly at the link below). Of course, in that format all video, audio, and animated gifs are omitted.

To read it online, go to <https://archive.org/details/ucla-faculty-association-blog-4th-quarter-2023>.

Download at <https://archive.org/download/ucla-faculty-association-blog-4th-quarter-2023/UCLA%20Faculty%20Association%20Blog%20%204th%20Quarter%202023.pdf>.

Slowly Grinding Wheels

Wednesday, January 03, 2024



The wheels of justice are notoriously slow. Blog readers may recall the *Klein vs. Bernardo* case that arose from the George Floyd affair and aftermath. We noted the case in a prior posting.* It has been hard to track developments in the case. At one point it appeared that a trial might occur in the fall of 2023. However, someone with legal expertise and access has now provided yours truly with the current schedule.

On January 19, there will be a hearing in which it appears legal counsel for the defendants (Bernardo and UC) will attempt to exclude some potential evidence. "Motion in Limine."

On February 26, there will be a "final status conference."

On March 4, a jury trial will begin.

All of this will take place on Dept. O, 1725 Main St., Santa Monica, unless some settlement is reached.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2023/07/two-speech-cases-that-involve-ucla.html>. Scroll down to the second case. Klein continues as a lecturer at Anderson:

<https://www.anderson.ucla.edu/faculty-and-research/accounting/faculty/klein>.

The Harvard Resignation: Implications

Wednesday, January 03, 2024



The resignation of Harvard president Claudine Gay yesterday not surprisingly has led to substantial commentary. Yours truly noted an opinion piece in the NY Times by Bret Stephens indicating that the problem was Harvard had selected someone as president who wasn't a top scholar.* I'm not sure the modern major university president has to be a great scholar, contrary to Stephens' view (although engaging in plagiarism is a disqualifying Bad Thing). University presidents have to raise money and represent the university in the larger community including among the political authorities, whether their campuses are public or private. They have also to be sensitive to the internal academic community.

UC president Clark Kerr said the job was to deal with parking for the faculty, football for the alumni, and sex for the students. He omitted the political realm in his listing, the realm which ultimately got him fired. Typically, presidents have what amounts to a chief operating officer to manage the day-to-day affairs of the institution while they deal with the various constituencies and interest groups. Gay at Harvard wasn't up to the job on various dimensions as both events on campus and at the congressional hearing demonstrated, although reportedly she did well in previous positions. There is the old saying about a tendency to be promoted to your level of incompetence. Maybe that's what happened.

Beyond Harvard's problems, however, there is bound now to be a rethinking about university governance more generally and the role of the chief officer. The degree to which universities and their top leaders are responsible for student actions keeps coming up, intensified by the Israel-Gaza War, but not beginning with that event. To the extent that universities provide student groups with official recognition and compel all students to pay fees to support various student organizations needs to be rethought.** Otherwise, the university IS responsible, at least to a degree, for what happens within those organizations. The recent uptick in union activity, including the high-profile student-worker strike at UC, suggests a need to revisit the current university labor model.

There may be a temptation by university leaders to keep their heads down and hope and

pray that no further issues arise on their watch. An alternative, however, would be to set up a process to examine such touchy issues as changing public opinion about higher ed, concerns about speech, diversity of viewpoints, etc. Will any UC campus leaders do it? Will the Academic Senate? Will the Regents?

All is not well. Harvard's problems are not unique.

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* <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/01/02/opinion/harvard-claudine-gay-resignation.html>.

Apart from the Bret Stephens piece, you can find the letter of resignation at:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/01/02/us/clauidine-gay-resignation-letter-harvard.html>.

A statement from the Harvard board that oversees the university is at:

<https://www.nytimes.com/live/2024/01/02/us/clauidine-gay-harvard#a-statement-from-harvards-governing-board>.

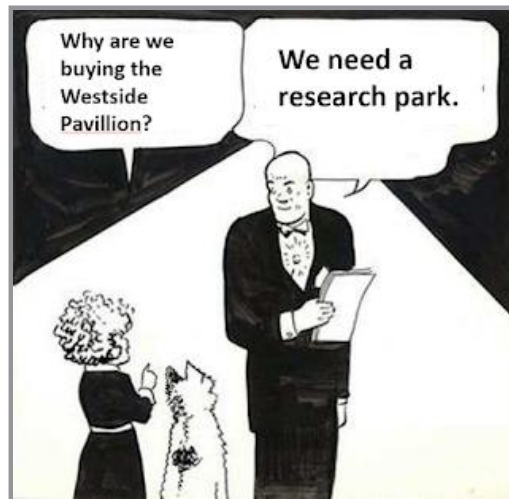
A CNN chronology of the event is at:

<https://amp.cnn.com/cnn/2024/01/02/business/timeline-harvard-president-claudine-gay-resignation/index.html>.

** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyJ33TEFOXM>.

\$700 Million (!!!) Research Park

Wednesday, January 03, 2024



Question for Daddy UCLAbucks. Recall our recent posts about UCLA's purchase of the Westside Pavillion?* Here is the latest:

After \$700M Deal, UCLA To Transform Westside Pavilion Into Research Park

Project previously dubbed One Westside, it was set to be massive Google office developed by Hudson Pacific Properties and Macerich

By Greg Cornfield, January 3, 2024, [Commercial Observer](#)

Hudson Pacific Properties and mall giant Macerich have sold the projects known as One Westside and Westside Two in Los Angeles in a landmark \$700 million deal with the University of California.

UCLA announced Wednesday will transform the 687,000-square-foot property on L.A.'s Westside into a large-scale research park. This comes after CO reported the property is likely destined for a life sciences redevelopment following news that UCLA was looking to acquire the former shopping center portion that was intended to be a large-scale trophy office fully leased to Google (GOOGL) through 2036.

The research park will house the California Institute for Immunology and Immunotherapy at UCLA and the UCLA Center for Quantum Science and Engineering, as well as programs across the disciplines, the university said.

HPP held a 75 percent interest and Macerich a 25 percent interest in the joint venture that owned the assets. Google had signed a 14-year lease that was announced five years ago in 2019, and commenced in 2022. It was set to generate \$43.2 million of net operating income annually for HPP. It is not immediately clear the status of that lease. The Mountain View-based company has been spending hundreds of millions of dollars cutting office leasing, but that had not yet included the West Pavilion project.

The sale of 10800, 10830 and 10850 West Pico Boulevard to UC is a godsend for studio

and office landlord HPP, which suffered through the Hollywood strikes last year and has been unloading underperforming office properties from its portfolio.

“The opportunistic sale of One Westside and Westside Two significantly bolsters our balance sheet and we now have no debt maturities until year-end 2025,” Victor Coleman, chairman and CEO of HPP, said in a statement.

Macerich CEO Tom O’Hern said net proceeds will enable the firm to “further deleverage and improve our liquidity profile, allowing us to more aggressively advance Macerich’s successful densification-diversification strategy” of adding new uses to residential, hotel and office space.

UCLA has been an active buyer in commercial real estate this year. In June, the university acquired the historic Trust Building in Downtown L.A. for less than \$40 million to expand with new classrooms and administration offices. UCLA also acquired a 24.5-acre campus in Rancho Palos Verdes and an 11-acre residential site in San Pedro for \$80 million in January 2023.

Source: <https://commercialobserver.com/2024/01/la-sale-ucla-hudson-pacific-google-life-sciences/>.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2023/12/about-yesterdays-post-on-purchase-of.html>; <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2023/12/another-ucla-real-estate-purchase.html>.

\$700 Million (!!!) Research Park - Part 2

Thursday, January 04, 2024



Another question for Daddy UCLAbucks

Or direct to <https://twitter.com/UCLA/status/1742636212958175344>.

See the announcement ceremony. Photo below. Video link below photo.



Link: <https://ia601304.us.archive.org/0/items/newsom-1-1-24-new-year/newsom%201-3-24%20UCLA%20research%20center.mp4>.

The Newsom Files

Thursday, January 04, 2024



Just a reminder that we preserve of videos posted by the governor along with other related videos dealing with goings on in the state.

These videos go back to the early pandemic period. The links for 2023 are provided below:

October-December 2023

<https://archive.org/details/newsom-fast-food-bill-posted-10-1-2023>

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July-September 2023

<https://archive.org/details/newsom-7-1-23-wildfire>

==

April-June 2023

<https://archive.org/details/anti-sb-525-25-min-wage-health-4-6-23>

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January-March 2023

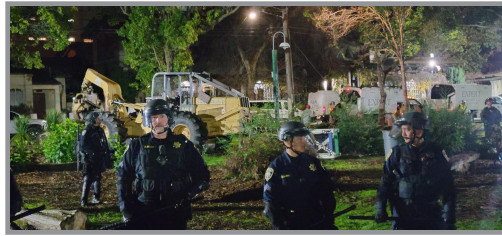
<https://archive.org/details/newsom-1-6-23-progress>

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Included are the budget messages. Of course, the governor will present his 2024-25 budget proposal early this month. Also due will be the State of the State address.

The People's Park Conflict Resumes

Thursday, January 04, 2024



Various tweets from the [Daily Cal](#) and others report a clearing and enclosure of the park area:

January 4, 2024

Contact: Dan Mogulof | dmogulof@berkeley.edu | (510) 919-6954

People's Park closure

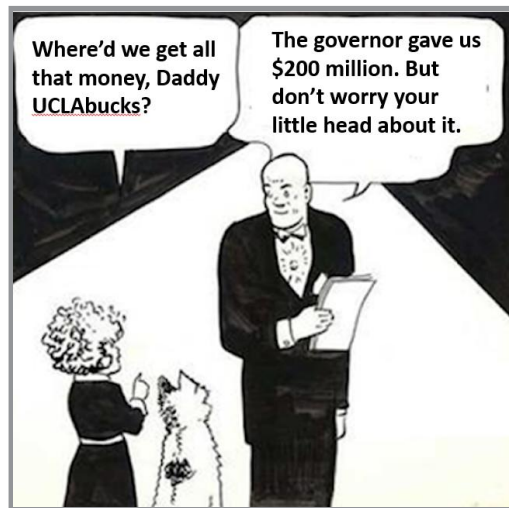
Late last night/early this morning UC Berkeley began work to cordon off the [People's Park](#) construction site. Over the next 3-4 days, [surrounding streets will be closed to traffic](#) while crews install a secure perimeter consisting of double-stacked shipping containers. While construction of the project's two urgently needed housing facilities--[one for students](#), the other [for unhoused and very low income people](#)--will not resume until legal issues are fully resolved by the California Supreme Court, the courts have repeatedly affirmed the university's ability to enforce the site's legal status as a closed construction zone.

"Given that the existing legal issues will inevitably be resolved, we decided to take this necessary step now in order to minimize disruption for the public and our students when we are eventually cleared to resume construction," said UC Berkeley Chancellor Carol Christ. "Unfortunately, our planning and actions must take into account that some of the project's opponents have previously resorted to violence and vandalism, despite strong support for the project on the part of students, community members, advocates for unhoused people, the elected leadership of the City of Berkeley, as well as the legislature and governor of the state of California."

Source: <https://twitter.com/SupriyaYelimeli/status/1742831764392079795/>.

\$700 Million (!!!) Research Park - Part 3

Friday, January 05, 2024



She keeps asking pesky questions.

It may surprise you to know that in a period of state budget distress, the governor is putting \$200 million into UCLA's new research park at the old Westside Pavillion. From the [Orange County Register](#):

... Newsom has provided UCLA with \$200 million in state funding to transform the 700,000 square-foot property into a research park focused on curing diseases, turbocharging computers' problem-solving capabilities and helping humanity adapt to the challenges of the future. The state has committed an additional \$300 million in the future to continue supporting UCLA's research, he said.

"What I love to say about the state of California is the future happens here first; we are the state of dreamers, of doers, of entrepreneurs and innovators" Newsom said on Wednesday. "We also recognize that if you're going to do well in the future, you've got to invest in it and that's really the spirit of why we are here."

The envisioned research park, located two miles from UCLA's Westwood campus, will house the new California Institute for Immunology and Immunotherapy at UCLA and the UCLA Center for Quantum Science and Engineering...

Full story at <https://www.ocregister.com/2024/01/03/gov-newsom-gives-ucla-200-million-to-turn-westside-mall-into-research-center/>.

From the governor's news release:

... The new UCLA Research Park is made possible in part by a prior state investment to establish and fund the immunology and immunotherapy institute at UCLA. The institute is also supported by a group of founding donors from the biotechnology, academic, entrepreneurship, and philanthropic communities. Harnessing the power of public-private partnerships, and working with key partners — including Google, Hudson Pacific

Properties, and Macerich — the state is saving approximately \$223 million on the research park and opening years ahead of schedule. Google, which previously leased part of the property, helped enable and support UCLA's acquisition...

Full release at <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2024/01/03/governor-newsom-announces-world-leading-science-technology-research-center-in-los-angeles/>.

Yours truly has been told that when this project went before the Regents, they were told about building it over some med center parking lot. What has emerged seems to be a whole lot bigger.

The People's Park Conflict Resumes - Part 2

Friday, January 05, 2024



More detail is now available beyond yesterday's post. From SFGATE: ... *The police descended on the park around midnight and started asking people to leave, (Berkeley spokesperson Dan) Mogulof said. Both activists and unhoused people were cleared from the space. Once the space was clear, wide-load trucks carrying the shipping containers rolled in. Videos posted on social media showed the shipping containers being placed around the park and trees being removed, along with people's belongings. As the workers moved in, at about 4:30 a.m., a man with a bullhorn or some kind of amplified sound walked the residential streets around the park saying, "Berkeley, wake up. People's Park is under attack."*

The Daily Cal reported that police threatened to use pepper spray and tear gas against anyone who did not leave the site. Mogulof said neither were used.

...The university has sought to build student housing on People's Park for years. In addition to student housing, the People's Park housing complex is slated to provide up to 125 apartments offering supportive housing with onsite services for unhoused and low-income residents, as well as open landscaped areas, UC Berkeley said. Under the plan, "more than 60% of the 2.8-acre site will be preserved as open space and revitalized into a renewed park space that reinforces the site's history," the university said. The site will also include a feature that honors the park's history...

Full story at <https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/uc-berkeley-takes-over-peoples-park-18589002.php>.

You can see some video clips of the closing off of the park at the link below:

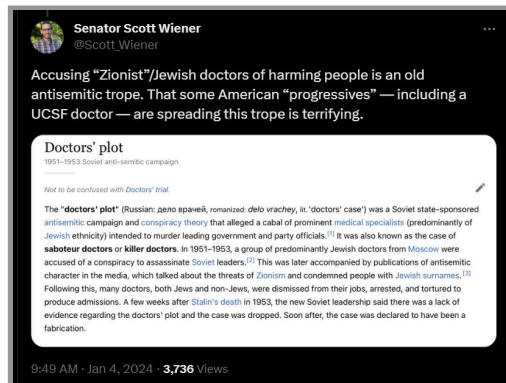
Or direct to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXy-lztNxbE>.

This is NOT OK

Friday, January 05, 2024



As State Senator Wiener points out, for a ladder faculty member of UC-San Francisco* to call into question the integrity and care provided by colleagues - and in a public forum - is not OK. His post above is at https://twitter.com/scott_wiener/status/1742966467484868909.



Source: https://twitter.com/Scott_Wiener/status/1742966472903987451.

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* <https://medicine.ucsf.edu/people/rupa-marya>. She has since blocked her X (Twitter) account from which the screenshot by Sen. Wiener was taken.

Free COVID Tests from the Postal Service

Friday, January 05, 2024



COVID rates are rising. From the Sacramento Bee:

ARE FREE AT-HOME COVID TESTS AVAILABLE IN CALIFORNIA?

As of Nov. 20, California residents are eligible for another order of four free at-home tests from the United States Postal Service. Orders can be placed online and will be shipped for free.

To order tests:

<https://special.usps.com/testkits>

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Full article at: <https://www.sacbee.com/news/california/article283761478.html>.

New Service for Those Thinking of Retirement

Saturday, January 06, 2024



I believe the recently-released video below refers to a traveling team of retirement counselors who will visit the various UC campuses. There were complaints when campus-level retirement services were cut back several years ago that dealing with process of retirement had become more difficult. The idea of having individuals who at least visit the campuses is a partial replacement. Click on the link below:

Or direct to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b7ZppkAcYM8>.

Will Telescope Removal Foster Telescope Replacement?

Sunday, January 07, 2024



From time to time we look in at the ongoing controversy about building a thirty-meter telescope (TMT) in Hawaii. If you're not familiar with this longrunning controversy and UC's involvement, use the search engine on this blog and words such as TMT, telescope, and Hawaii to understand the story. From the [Honolulu Star-Advertiser](#):

The Caltech Submillimeter Observatory telescope on Mauna Kea has been removed and packed for shipment to Chile. Caltech, a private science and engineering institute in Pasadena, Calif., said in a news release Thursday that with the removal, "Deconstruction of the dome and restoration of the site will resume after the winter." Caltech said the cost of deconstruction and site restoration is expected to exceed \$4 million and is being funded primarily by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, while the removal of the telescope for reuse is being funded by the Heising-Simons Foundation. The Caltech telescope is the first of five earmarked for decommissioning to make way for the landmark Thirty Meter Telescope.

Caltech is one of the partners planning to build the \$2.65 billion TMT, along with the University of California and science institutions from China, India, Canada and Japan. The removal of five telescopes from the Mauna Kea summit is a condition of the TMT's conservation district use permit. However, the controversial telescope remains on hold while the National Science Foundation conducts environmental studies and weighs the possibility of investing hundreds of millions of dollars in the project. How that plan ultimately plays out remains uncertain under the new Maunakea Stewardship Oversight Authority, approved in 2022 by the state Legislature and signed into law by former Gov. David Ige. The authority will take full control of the astronomy precinct from the university following a five-year transition period.

...The latest University of Hawaii Mauna Kea Master Plan calls for a maximum of nine observatories to remain atop Hawaii's tallest mountain by the time the Mauna Kea Science Reserve lease expires in 2033. There are currently 13 telescopes, with four to be decommissioned, and if the TMT is built, a fifth would be taken out of operation.

Full story at <https://news.yahoo.com/observatory-telescope-removed-mauna-kea-170200797.html>.

The People's Park Conflict Resumes - Part 3

Monday, January 08, 2024



Even with all the shipping containers in place, there are still legal issues potentially holding up building student housing in People's Park. From the [San Francisco Chronicle](#):

... The university's \$312 million project would build housing for about 1,100 students and for more than 100 of the homeless people who regularly camp on the 2.8-acre site south of the Berkeley campus. The court agreed last May to hear UC Berkeley's appeal of a lower-court ruling that said UC had failed to consider alternative housing sites or the impact on neighborhood residents of noise generated by the students.

Lawyers for Gov. Gavin Newsom, who supported the appeal, had told the court last April that the case "provides an opportunity for the Court to reaffirm that CEQA (the California Environmental Quality Act) is a tool to ensure public participation, informed decision-making, and thoughtful development — but not an instrument to block necessary progress or deny to others safe, healthy, and affordable housing."

Then in September, the governor signed AB1307 by Assembly Member Buffy Wicks, D-Oakland, which exempted UC Berkeley from any previous legal requirement to consider other sites for the project, and also said noise from future residents was irrelevant to environmental reviews of a housing project. That law effectively resolved the case, the university's lawyers contended.

AB1307 means that California's environmental law, which requires review of the impact of state-approved construction, can no longer "consider people as pollution," attorney Jeremy Rosen told the court, quoting Wicks' description of her bill. Rosen urged the justices to uphold UC's approval plan "quickly so that the construction on the urgently needed People's Park project can resume."

Not so fast, said Thomas Lippe, a lawyer for the neighborhood groups.

UC Berkeley has more than 45,000 students and has forecast adding 8,500 more in the next 12 years, along with 3,600 employees. While AB1307 exempts the university from considering the neighborhood impact of noise from residents of the planned People's Park housing, Lippe wrote, state law still requires UC to find alternatives to "noise impacts throughout Berkeley's neighborhoods caused by all of the students included in the ... projected enrollment-driven population increase, whether housed in UC residential projects or not."

"This noise will be caused, not just by UC's residential project occupants and their guests, but by all of the persons added to Berkeley's neighborhoods, many of whom UC

will not house,” Lippe told the court.

And even though the new law means the court no longer has to decide whether UC Berkeley should have considered sites outside People’s Park for new student housing, the attorney said, “the Court should decide the issue anyway because it raises issues of broad public interest that are likely to recur.”

After granting a review, the court generally schedules a hearing only after reaching a tentative majority vote among its seven justices, as a ruling is legally required no more than 90 days later. No hearing has been scheduled, but the justices have given no indication that they plan to dismiss the neighborhood groups’ case without hearing arguments and issuing a ruling. Until then, construction of the housing is on hold.

The case is Make UC a Good Neighbor v. UC Regents, S279242.

Full story at <https://www.sfchronicle.com/politics/article/peoples-park-lawsuit-18589923.php>.

Student-Worker Strike Repercussions - Part 26 (dissent)

Monday, January 08, 2024



From the Santa Cruz Lookout: *It's been a little more than year since University of California graduate student workers ended their historic six-week strike and ratified a new contract that included significant raises and increases in child care subsidies. But the union representing nearly 2,000 graduate students at UC Santa Cruz who voted overwhelmingly to reject the contract says it's continuing to press for a better deal to help teaching assistants, tutors and researchers who are struggling with the region's high cost of living.*

More than 60% of the University of California's 36,000 graduate student workers voted to support the contract, which was ratified Dec. 23, 2022, and expires May 31, 2025. The deal increased minimum pay for academic student employees from about \$23,250 to about \$34,000 for nine months of part-time work. Child care reimbursements were set to \$1,350 per quarter, plus \$1,350 for summer. However, the contract also exacerbated a rift among UC campuses, with representatives from UCSC, UC Santa Barbara and UC Merced urging their members to reject the deal. More than 80% of Santa Cruz's union members voted against it.

UCSC unit chair Jack Davies previously told Lookout he thought the majority of the campus membership voted against the deal because of the higher cost of living in Santa Cruz and workers' confidence that they could win more concessions by continuing with the strike. In addition, Davies said many Santa Cruz graduate student workers were against the new contract implementing a tier system for the first time among the campuses – UCLA, UC Berkeley and UC San Francisco were given a higher base pay starting at \$36,500. The UC attributed the tier system to higher costs of living in those areas and the need to compete for top talent.

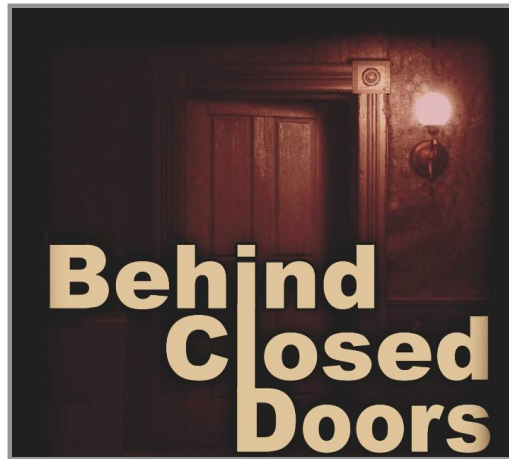
UCSC's United Auto Workers 2865 head steward Rebecca Gross told Lookout recently that while the gains from the new contract were significant, graduate student workers are still struggling to make ends meet in Santa Cruz. ...Gross said the union isn't yet ready to publicize what it's planning to do, but that in January it would announce an action

planned to take place in the winter quarter.

Full article at <https://lookout.co/uc-grad-student-strike-one-year-later-ucsc-workers-still-pressing-for-better-deal/>.

Sorry - Not For You Today

Tuesday, January 09, 2024



From the Regents' website:

Because the membership of the Committee to Advise the President on the Selection of a Chancellor of the Berkeley campus includes five members of the Regents' Finance and Capital Strategies Committee, Governance Committee, and Special Committee on Athletics, there exists the potential for having present a quorum of a Regents' Committee when the advisory committee meets.

Although no business of the committees will be considered by the advisory committee, this notice of meeting is served in order to comply fully with pertinent open meeting laws.

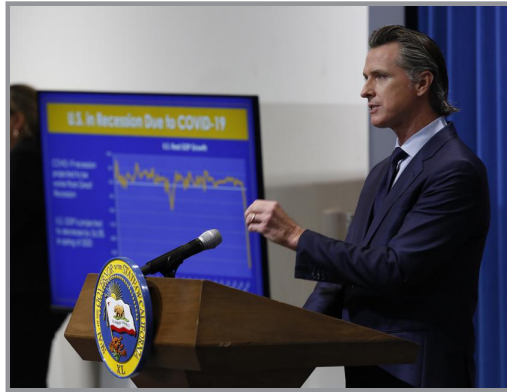
On Tuesday, January 9, 2024, there will be a Closed Session, Special Meeting of Regents' Committees concurrent with the Committee to Advise the President on the Selection of a Chancellor of the Berkeley campus. The purpose of the meeting is to consider matters related to the appointment and employment of a new Chancellor [Personnel matters, Education Code section 92032(b)(7)].

The meeting will convene at 12:00 p.m. and adjourn at approximately 5:00 p.m.

Source: <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/jan24/special1.9.24.pdf>.

Budget Tomorrow

Tuesday, January 09, 2024



Governor Newsom - under the state constitution - must provide his budget proposal for fiscal year 2024-25 by January 10. There is no sign of him doing so today so it has to be tomorrow.

If we look at past history, Newsom, unlike prior governors, will basically recite the budget with the help of charts, perhaps going on for an hour and a half. Prior governors made a relatively short overview presentation before turning the podium over to the budget director for more detailed information.

Keep in mind that what will be presented is a proposal. It is up to the legislature to enact a budget and it won't do so until June. Also keep in mind that words such as "deficit," "surplus," and "balance" have elastic use in California budget-speak.

Also expected tomorrow: The state controller will release data on cash receipts for the current year through December.

UPDATED Info on the Recent Data Breach

Tuesday, January 09, 2024



I'm Caitlin from Delta Dental of California and affiliates, it's nice to e-meet you. I'm following up on the article* you published on Dec. 23, 2023, and am hoping you can issue some corrections.

1. Please amend all references of "Delta Dental" to "Delta Dental of California and affiliates" or "Delta Dental of California" in the title and body of the article. The broad "Delta Dental" refers to the Delta Dental Plans Association (DDPA). They are two different companies. Delta Dental of California and affiliates provides quality oral health care to 45 million people across 15 states, the District of Columbia and other U.S. territories. The Delta Dental Plans Association ("Delta Dental") is a network of dental insurance companies composed of 39 independent Delta Dental member companies that operate in all 50 states and serves more than 80 million Americans.
 2. Will you please rephrase the last sentence in the first paragraph to accurately convey that Delta Dental of California and affiliates was one of thousands of organizations impacted by a global data security incident resulting from a previously unknown vulnerability in the widely used MOVEit file transfer software, made by Progress Software? Noting that Delta Dental of California and affiliates' investigation found that approximately 7 million individuals were impacted. However, the overall impact of the MOVEit data breach is greater than that. TechCrunch reported a couple of weeks ago that the totality of the MOVEit breach has impacted almost 84 million individuals.
 3. In the third paragraph, the last sentence could be updated to, "They are in the process of mailing notification letters to impacted individuals."
 4. In the fourth paragraph, please replace "pin number" with "membership number".
- UC Office of the President has updated the article on their website to reflect these changes: <https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/2023/12/letter-to-the-uc-community-regarding-the-delta-dentalmoveit-data-breach.html>.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Caitlin

Caitlin Dong | Corporate Communications | cdong@delta.org

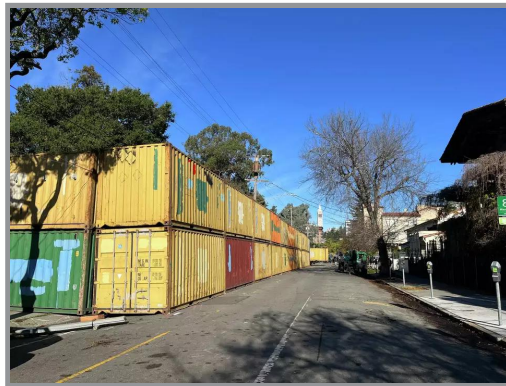
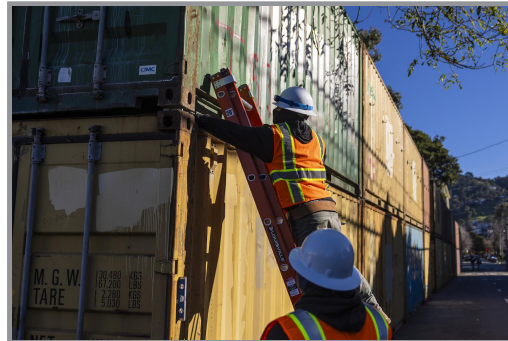
Delta Dental of California | 560 Mission Street, Suite 1300 | San Francisco, CA 94105

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2023/12/hint-freeze-your-credit-or-extraction.html>.

Welcome to the Walled-off

Wednesday, January 10, 2024



People's Park has largely disappeared behind a wall of shipping containers. Now you might wonder where all these containers come from. Yours truly has no inside knowledge. But the imbalance of trade with China likely has something to do with it. Containers come into the ports with imports. But not so many are needed for exports. So, the extras either are sent back empty or pile up somewhere. In short, some clever person trying to design a wall for People's Park discovered there were lots of surplus containers needing a home.

Empty Containers Will Overwhelm Ports in 2023 Warns Sea-Intelligence



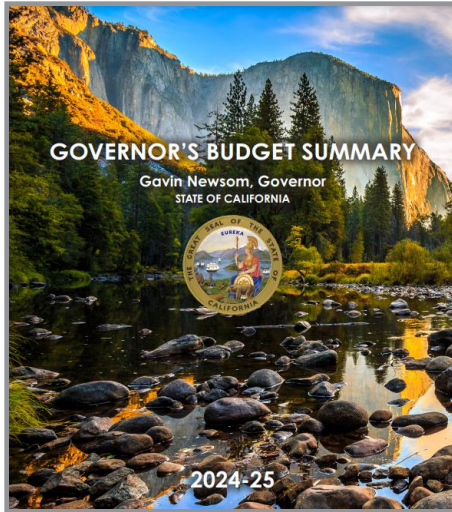
Sea-Intelligence forecasts there will be 4.5 million excess containers at the start of 2023
PUBLISHED SEP 8, 2022 6:48 PM BY THE MARITIME EXECUTIVE

Unless the trade deficit with China massively turns into a surplus, exactly what UC-

Berkeley will do with its containers when the project ends is not clear. The next time the presidents of China and the US meet in San Francisco, they might want to hop across the Bay and resolve this problem. Just a thought...

The Governor's January Budget Proposal

Wednesday, January 10, 2024



The governor, by constitutional mandate, presented his budget proposal in a news conference today. He spoke for 57 minutes which for him was probably record brevity. But he then took questions from reporters for another 59 minutes for an almost two-hour performance. As always, there are flexible uses of words such as surplus, deficit, and balance. Rather than deal with that issue, below we have taken the governor's figures and rearranged them in a useful fashion. Various reserve accounts are linked to the general fund. When you put them all together, as the table below shows, you get a deficit for the current fiscal year (2023-24) of -\$37.4 billion. Note that since we are only in early January, almost half the year remains to occur, so that number is a forecast based on information at the half-way point. In the proposal for the coming fiscal year (2024-25) beginning July 1, there is a deficit of -\$8.8 billion.

January 10, 2023 Budget Proposal				
\$Millions	Fiscal 2023-24	Surplus/Deficit	Fiscal 2024-25	Surplus/Deficit
General Fund				
GF Balance Begin	\$42,078		\$68,029	
Revenues & Transfers	196,859		214,699	
Expenditures	230,908		208,718	
Surplus/Deficit	-34,049		+5,981	
GF Balance End	8,029	-34,049	14,010	+5,981
Public School Account	5,730	-4,199*	3,852	-1,878
Safety Net Reserve	900	0*	0	-900
BSA (rainy day)	23,132	+880*	11,106	-12,026
Total Reserves	37,791		28,968	
Total Surplus/Deficit		-37,368		-8,828

*Calculation of these figures were based on starting reserve levels from 2023-24 enacted budget. Starting reserve levels \$Millions: Public School, \$9,929; Safety Net, \$900; BSA, \$22,252.

Source: <https://ebudget.ca.gov/FullBudgetSummary.pdf>; <https://ebudget.ca.gov/2023-24/pdf/Enacted/BudgetSummary/SummaryCharts.pdf>.

Essentially, there was a big drop this year in receipts related to capital gains, causing much of this year's problems. The Dept. of Finance appears to be projecting similar receipts from capital gains next year, i.e., flat receipts. Other tax receipts are also largely flat, which suggests an economic slowdown underlying the projections. Revenues and

transfers goes up mainly because the Budget Stabilization Account (BSA, "rainy day fund") is tapped.

Let's turn to the UC component of the budget. The Regents will get a report and will undoubtedly say nice things, as will the UC president.

UC Component of Governor's January Proposal			
(\$Million)			
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
"Ongoing"	\$4,377.0	\$4,722.2	\$4,739.3
"One-time"	532.5	140.0	1.1
Total	4,909.5	4,870.2	4,740.4

Although it is said that we have a compact with the governor, the spending on UC is divided into two categories, ongoing and one-time. The problem is that a dollar is a dollar and the division is artificial. In nominal terms, the state is spending less year by year although enrollment - under pressure from the governor and legislature - is up. This time around, the governor acknowledges that the "ongoing" piece, which by his calculation should rise by \$499 million, is being "deferred." He said UC could borrow against the deferral in his news conference. But the compact is being bent, even by the governor's calculation.

=== You can see the budget news conference at <https://archive.org/details/newsom-1-1-24-new-year/Governor+Gavin+Newsom+Presents+the+2024-25+State+Budget+Proposal++1-10-24.mp4>.

Regents vs. Senate - Part 2

Thursday, January 11, 2024



In a prior post last month, we noted that the Regents and the Academic Senate seem to have different views on the efficacy of online education.* This tension appears to be part of a larger tendency of the Regents to consult - but then ignore - the Senate, as occurred in the case of the use of the SAT for admissions.**

Inside Higher Ed now picks up the issue:

Early last year, the University of California Academic Senate changed the system's policies to essentially ban students from earning a fully online bachelor's degree from any of its 10 campuses. The decision drew both internal and external criticism that the university was ignoring the potential benefits of virtual learning—and troubled some UC administrators and regents who believe the governing board must have a say in changing the institution's degree offerings.

Late in 2023, faculty leaders and administrators at the university hatched a compromise: a 20-member presidential task force to look into the efficacy of online degree programs and evaluate instructional modalities. University leaders characterized the committee as a way to “provide for high-quality in-person, hybrid and online offerings for students, including innovations that promote engagement and learning no matter where students are located.”

While at its core the tension at UC is over the quality of online education, it is also noteworthy for what it says about the balance of power and authority in shared governance at an institution that takes that value more seriously than most. In questioning the action of the Academic Senate to bar online degrees, regents clearly believe that decisions on which academic programs the university offers, and how they are delivered, falls under the regents' authority...

The Senate was directed in November to find a way to address the regents' concerns. Dr. Drake warned the Senate that the board could decide to revoke the Senate's authority over online degrees. In a statement for this article, Dr. Drake played down the potential disagreement between entities, stating shared governance is an “essential pillar of the successful operation and management of the university.”

The task force, which had its first meeting in December, includes 10 faculty members and 10 members from the administrative side, with a focus on representing as many campuses as possible. The panel may bring in consultants with "specialized expertise" should the need arise, said Steven W. Cheung, vice chair of the UC Faculty Senate...

Full article at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/tech-innovation/teaching-learning/2024/01/09/university-california-system-considers-online>.

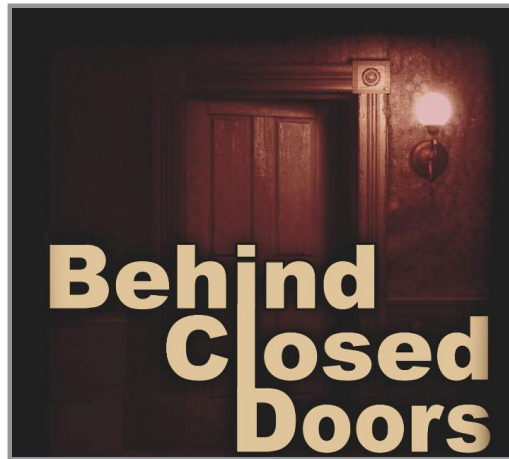
In short, folks are beginning to notice the Regents vs. Senate tensions. ===

* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2023/12/regents-vs-senate.html>.

**The NY Times had a recent review of the general question of the use of the SAT which essentially mirrors the position taken by the Senate: " *The Misguided War on the SAT: Colleges have fled standardized tests, on the theory that they hurt diversity. That's not what the research shows,*" <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/01/07/briefing/the-misguided-war-on-the-sat.html>.

Two Regents Meetings You Can't Attend

Thursday, January 11, 2024



The Regents' Working Group on Equitable Student Employment Opportunities - a complicated title that refers to the effort to find a legal way for UC to employ undocumented student - will meet behind closed doors on January 12. On January 11, also behind closed doors, the search committee for the next UCLA chancellor is meeting.

That's all we know. That's probably all we ever will know.

===

The notices are at:

<https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/jan24/special1.12.24.pdf> and at:

<https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/jan24/special1.11.24.pdf>.

The Condensed Musical Version

Thursday, January 11, 2024



Yesterday, we presented our summary analysis of the governor's January budget proposal for fiscal year 2024-25.* Today, as a special service for those not willing to sit through a two-hour news conference at which the proposal was presented, we have our seven-minute musical condensation:

Or direct to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JXSs1friWqQ>.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/01/the-governors-january-budget-proposal.html>.

State Cash at the Half-Way Point

Friday, January 12, 2024



On Wednesday, we provided a summary of the state budget situation in the context of the governor's budget proposal for 2024-25. We also have from the state controller information on the cash situation for this year through December. December was a significant marker because income tax due dates for most of California were delayed, eventually to December.

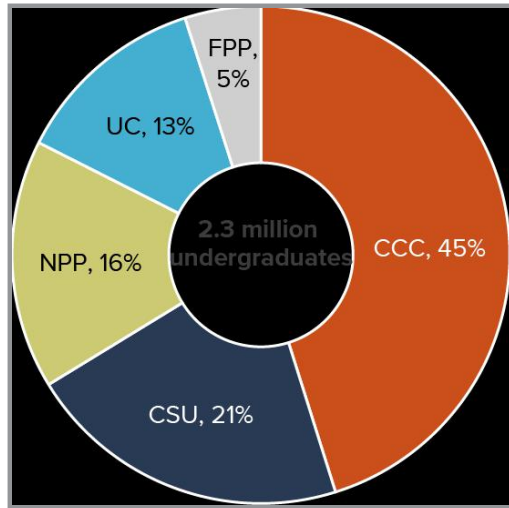
As it turned out, a lot less came in than had been projected. Receipts are listed as \$98.5 billion, well below the forecast level of \$126.6 billion. The gap between actual and forecast was centered in personal income tax receipts (loss of capital gains revenue) and the corporate tax.

Still, the state had on hand \$88.5 billion in unused borrowable resources, a little below the forecast level of \$91.8 billion, but still a lot. So despite the state's current budget pressures, there won't be a need to run to Wall Street to handle the current problem - unlike what has occurred in earlier budget downturns.

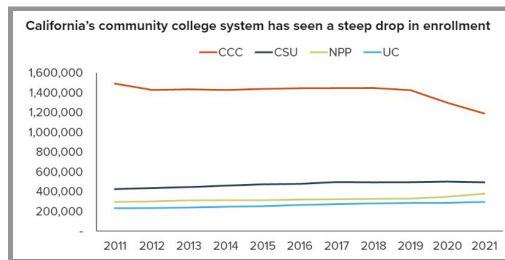
The controller's data are at <https://sco.ca.gov/Files-ARD/CASH/December2023StatementofGeneralFundCashReceiptsandDisbursements.pdf>.

The Community College Issue

Saturday, January 13, 2024



Fall 2021 undergraduate enrollments in California are shown above. NPP = non-profit private. FPP = for-profit private. The legislature and the governor are pushing for more transfers to UC - and UCLA in particular. However, as the chart below shows, enrollments in community colleges have fallen, creating a smaller "base" for transfers.



Source: PPIC: <https://www.ppic.org/publication/californias-higher-education-system/>.

Something was omitted

Saturday, January 13, 2024



EdSource asked education-related officials to comment on the governor's proposed budget for education. Most of the comments dealt with K-14 (the Prop 98 world). But I noted one from the chair of the state assembly committee that deals with higher ed:

Mike Fong (D-Alhambra), chair, Assembly Higher Education Committee

"I appreciate the work on this draft budget and understand the difficulty and challenges that the 2024-25 fiscal year presents; however, I am disappointed in the governor's proposal to eliminate the Student Housing Revolving Loan Fund and provide no allocation to implement the 2022 Cal Grant Reform Act. We must continue to find new ways to increase accessibility to higher education, especially for our most vulnerable communities who need these vital resources to complete higher education.

I avidly support the governor's goal to ensure our students are prepared to enter the workforce. Developing a Master Plan for Career Education will require collaboration with diverse stakeholders and the Legislature. I look forward to working with the governor's office and all parties on this critical issue."

Full story at <https://edsource.org/2024/advocates-education-leaders-speak-out-on-newsoms-initial-plan-for-state-budget/703833>.

Note that there is no mention in Fong's statement of the fact that the governor "deferred" (really omitted) the incremental allocation due to UC under the compact. Yes, he said it would be included in the following year. But in the following year - a long time from now - there will be a new budget with no guarantee that it will include repayment of the omitted amount. That decision will be up to a new legislature. Nothing can commit that future legislature to repay the seeming debt. The governor's statement in his news conference that UC could borrow against the future repayment thus empty of any meaning unless he is proposing some kind of "loan" from the state that doesn't have to be repaid if there is no future delayed compact payment. Is that offer on the table? Has anyone asked? Will the Regents ask at their upcoming January meeting? Will the issue even be raised then?

The Harvard Resignation: Implications - Part 2

Sunday, January 14, 2024



The Harvard situation following the Congressional hearing that ultimately set in motion the resignation of Harvard President Claudine Gay has yet to cool off. Some examples from last week:

Fortune carries a critique of the way the board that manages Harvard dealt with the situation:

<https://fortune.com/2024/01/10/yale-management-professor-harvard-board-failures-education-leadership-sonnenfeld/>.

The Harvard Crimson (and other sources) reports on a new lawsuit charging Harvard with fostering a climate of antisemitism:

<https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2024/1/12/harvard-lawsuit-campus-antisemitism/>.

The lawsuit itself is at:

<https://www.kasowitz.com/media/unxcnvp0/harvard-complaint.pdf>.

And there is a second round of Congressional investigations coming:

<https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2024/1/10/congress-antisemitism-investigation-documents/>.

Finally, there are the apologies:

<https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2024/1/13/harvard-extension-hochschild/>.

<https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2024/1/13/harvard-law-school-confrontation/>.

Lots of Interesting Topics in Upcoming January Regents Meetings

Sunday, January 14, 2024



Below is the preliminary agenda for the Regents meetings of January 23-35, 2024 in San Francisco. Faculty discipline, hiring of undocumented students, and other high-profile topics are included. Yours truly has added some notes on highlights.

UC Regents Agenda: January 23-25, 2024

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Tuesday, January 23

2:00 pm **Special Committee on Athletics** (open session - includes public comment session)

S1 Discussion: Strategic Campus Athletics Overview: UC Santa Barbara and UC San Diego

S2 Discussion: Student Athlete Perspectives: UC Davis and UC Irvine

Upon end of open session: Special Committee on Athletics (closed session)

S3(X) Discussion: Proposed Audit of UC Berkeley Athletics

NOTE: Such an audit could be very enlightening, given the big dollar amounts involved and issues of who gets what. The discussion of whether to do such an audit is to be behind closed doors. Were such an audit to be undertaken, however, it will not be easy to keep it secret.

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Wednesday, January 24

8:30 am **Board** (open session - includes public comment session)

Public Comment Period (30 minutes)

Remarks of the Chair of the Board

Remarks of the President of the University

Remarks of the Chair of the Academic Senate

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9:30 am **Health Services Committee** (closed session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of November 16, 2023

H1(X) Discussion: Appointment of and Compensation for Senior Vice President – Children’s Services and President, UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospitals, UCSF Health, San Francisco Campus

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Upon end of closed session: **Health Services Committee** (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of November 16, 2023

H1 Action: Approval of Appointment of and Compensation for Senior Vice President – Children’s Services and President, UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospitals, UCSF Health, San Francisco Campus as Discussed in Closed Session

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9:50 am Joint Meeting of the **Health Services Committee & Finance and Capital Strategies Committee** (closed session)

J1(X) Action: Acquisition and External Financing of Healthcare Facilities and Related Assets, Irvine Campus

J2(X) Action: Acquisition and External Financing of Acute Care Hospital and Associated Structures, UCLA Health, Los Angeles Campus.

NOTE: It is unclear what hospital this item refers to. UCLA bought a hospital in mid-city LA back in 2022, so it could refer to some further elements of that purchase.

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Concurrent Meetings

10:50 am **Finance and Capital Strategies Committee** (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of November 15, 2023

Consent Agenda:

F1A Action: Consent Item: Advanced Work Phase of the Central Utility Plant Modernization and Expansion Project, UC Davis Health, Sacramento Campus: Working Drawings and Construction Funding, Scope, and Design Following Certification of the Environmental Impact Report Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act

F1B Action: Consent Item: Authority to Indemnify the United States America, United States Coast Guard for the Revocable License for NonFederal Use of Federal Real Property to Place Ocean Current and Wave Equipment on the Coast Guard Station Humboldt Bay for UC Davis Bodega Marine Laboratory, Davis Campus

F1C Action: Consent Item: Authority to Indemnify the State of California, Department of Transportation for Lease of Property for Air Pollution Research for UC Davis College of Engineering, Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, Davis Campus

F2 Discussion: Update on the University's Integrated Capital Asset Management Program and Seismic Safety Program

F3 Discussion: **Review of the Governor's January Budget Proposal for 2024-25**

NOTE: We'll see here whether anyone wants to make a fuss about the governor's *de facto* violation of the compact's funding "guarantee" for UC in his January budget proposal for fiscal year 2024-25.

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10:50 am **Academic and Student Affairs Committee** (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of November 15, 2023

A1 Action: Approval of Multi-Year Plans for Professional Degree Supplemental Tuition (PDST) for Nine Graduate Professional Degree Programs

A2 Discussion: Final Report of the Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities

A3 Discussion: **UC Online and the Ecosystem of Online Education in the University of California System**

NOTE: We'll see if some of the tensions between some Regents and the Academic Senate are aired in public here. Scroll down to item in final Regents session on Senate regulation 610.E.

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11:50 am **National Labs Committee** (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of November 15, 2023

N1 Discussion: Annual Report on Fiscal Year 2023 National Laboratory Performance Ratings

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1:00 pm **Governance Committee** (closed session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of November 15, 2023

G1(X) Discussion: Collective Bargaining Matters

G2(X) Discussion: Appointment of and Compensation for University Librarian, Berkeley Campus

G3(X) Discussion: Appointment of and Compensation for University Librarian, Los Angeles Campus

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Upon end of closed session: **Governance Committee** (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of September 20, 2023

G2 Action: Approval of Appointment of and Compensation for University Librarian, Berkeley Campus as Discussed in Closed Session

G3 Action: Approval of Appointment of and Compensation for University Librarian, Los Angeles Campus as Discussed in Closed Session

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2:05 pm **Compliance and Audit Committee** (closed session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of November 15, 2023 and the Joint Meeting of the Compliance and Audit Committee and the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of November 15, 2023

C1(X) Discussion: Audit of the Retirement Administration Services Center

C2(X) Discussion: Update on the Systemwide Pension Administration Project

C3(X) Discussion: Update on Implementation of Recommendations from UCLA Health and Student Health Special Committee Report

The Committee also will review a long list of proposed lawsuit settlements and ongoing litigation developments including the pending trial of the **Klein vs. Regents case from UCLA**. (See <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/01/slowly-grinding-wheels.html>.)

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2:05 pm **Public Engagement and Development Committee** (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of November 15, 2023

P1 Discussion: Update from Interim Senior Vice President of External Relations and Communications

P2 Discussion: UC San Francisco Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative: Advancing Research to Inform Policymaking to Reduce the Impact of Homelessness

P3 Discussion: UC's Impact on California

P4 Discussion: UC State and Federal Governmental Relations Update and Advocacy Outlook

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3:55 pm **Joint Meeting of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee & Compliance and Audit Committee** (open session)

J3 Action: **Adoption of Regents Policy on the Use of University Administrative Websites**

NOTE: This is a major issue. Although the Academic Senate has produced guidelines for "political" statements by departments on UC websites, the guidelines have generally not been followed. It is unclear who put this item on the agenda. Possibly, more details on what the proposed policy is will be forthcoming before the meeting. But this is an action item, i.e., not just a discussion.

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4:25 pm **Joint Meeting of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee & Finance and Capital Strategies Committee** (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of September 21, 2023

J4 Discussion: Strategic Campus Overview: Merced Campus

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Thursday, January 25

8:30 am **Board** (open session - includes public comment session)

Public Comment Period (30 minutes)

Approval of the Minutes of the Meetings of November 15 and 16, 2023

Remarks from Student Associations

B1 Discussion: Faculty Discipline and Dismissal Policies and Process

NOTE: This item was proposed for discussion in this meeting by Regent Pérez back in November. He did not specify at the time what his concerns were. The concerns may have been related to conduct that received publicity connected to the Israel-Gaza War, but we probably won't know until the discussion. See <https://ia801400.us.archive.org/30/items/16-health-services-committee-board-investments/UC%20Regent%20P%C3%A9rez%20places%20item%20on%20Jan%202024%20agenda%20on%20Regents%20authority%20on%20faculty%20discipline%2011-16-2023.mp4>. Note that in closed session below, there is also an item related to faculty

discipline at Davis.

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Upon end of open session: **Board** (closed session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of November 16, 2023

B2(X) Discussion: Faculty Disciplinary Process, Davis Campus

B3(X) Discussion: Legal Issues Related to Equitable Student Employment Opportunities

The Regents will also vote on approving other closed session reports from the various committees.

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11:30 am **Board** (open session)

B4 Action: Amendment of Regents Policy 4407: Policy on Equitable Student Employment Opportunities

NOTE: Since this is on the agenda here, it appears that the Regents will make a final decision concerning whether UC will go ahead with the proposal to allow hiring of undocumented students.

B5 Discussion: Consideration of Senate Regulation 630.E. **See NOTE below.***

Committee Reports Including Approvals of Recommendations from Committees

B6 Discussion: Annual Report on Basic Needs

Source: <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/meetings/agendas/jan24.html>.

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*** This item appears linked to the issue of online degrees and education. Senate regulation 610.E reads:**

Each undergraduate student must complete a campus experience requirement. A minimum of six units of course credits per quarter (or semester) for three quarters (or two semesters) completed by each candidate for the bachelor's degree must be earned in courses designed to deliver to any enrolled student at least 50 percent of in-person instructional hours on any campus of the University of California or physical locations affiliated with programs listed in SR 630.D or in prison environments. To satisfy this requirement, at least two quarters or one semester must be completed during the regular academic year, with no more than one quarter or semester completed during the summer. "In-person" means instructors and students are in the same physical location. "Instructional hours" refer to time when instructors are presenting to or interacting with students during designated class times (e.g., lecture, laboratory, discussion, field work, problem sessions). For the purposes of this regulation, instructional hours do not include office hours, or recorded lectures provided as a supplement to designated hours

interacting with students. Individual Divisions may maintain a higher threshold for required in-person course credits per term or for the number of terms in which a threshold applies.

Source: <https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/bylaws-regulations/regulations/rpart3.html>.

DEI Lawsuit Against UC Dismissed on Standing Grounds

Monday, January 15, 2024



As we noted back in November, a lawsuit against mandated DEI statements in the community colleges led to a temporary injunction barring their implementation based on a "likelihood" that the case would succeed.* On the other hand, a lawsuit against such statements at UC seems to have failed, since the plaintiff never actually applied for a job at UC. From the [NY Times](#):

A federal judge threw out a lawsuit that challenged the University of California system's requirement that applicants for faculty positions must file diversity statements. The court, which issued the ruling on Friday, did not rule on the merits, but said that the plaintiff lacked standing to sue because he never actually applied for the open faculty position that he singled out in his suit.

Diversity statements — also known as diversity, equity and inclusion, or D.E.I., statements — ask candidates seeking a faculty job or promotion to describe how they would contribute to campus diversity. In his lawsuit, John Haltigan, who has a Ph.D. in developmental psychology, said he would have applied to a position at U.C. Santa Cruz, but that the D.E.I. statement made his application futile, since he is “committed to colorblindness and viewpoint diversity.” The lawsuit contended that the requirement acts as a “functional loyalty oath,” violating his rights under the First Amendment...

The court gave Mr. Haltigan three weeks to amend the complaint. “We will consider all avenues to vindicate our client’s First Amendment rights,” said Wilson Freeman, an attorney with the Pacific Legal Foundation [which is supporting the lawsuit]...

Full story at <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/01/13/us/lawsuit-dei-university-of-california.html>.

Yours truly, a nonlawyer, interprets the statement "consider all avenues..." to be something less than a guarantee to proceed with this particular plaintiff. It would seem that finding someone who actually applied or was employed by UC as a plaintiff would resolve the standing issue. But that's just me. And on the other hand, the Supreme Court ruled on behalf of a self-proclaimed wedding website designer who was in fact never asked to plan a same-sex wedding.** So what do I know?

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2023/11/community-college-dei-requirements.html>.

**303 Creative LLC v. Elenis, 21-476.

UC as a Tool for Urban Development

Monday, January 15, 2024



Downtown San Francisco has been having well-publicized problems related to the post-pandemic drop in demand for office space, fewer people to support local businesses, and issues of crime. As a result, the mayor wants UC to step in. Of course, as the history of UCLA in Westwood or UC-Irvine in its area shows, dropping a campus into an area can indeed spur economic activity and development. From the San Francisco Chronicle:

The University of California is considering expanding its presence in San Francisco after Mayor London Breed reached out to persuade the university system to grow its footprint downtown. A spokesperson for the UC Office of the President — which serves as the Oakland-based headquarters for the university system’s 10 campuses, five medical centers and three affiliated national laboratories — said the system is “exploring opportunities to advance their research, public service, and education mission through an expanded presence in San Francisco.”

UC Office of the President spokesperson Rachel Zaentz added that UC Berkeley is also involved in this effort. Both the president’s office and UC Berkeley are looking at options in response to a letter penned by Mayor London Breed in May to the UC Board of Regents requesting that it consider opening a new campus in downtown San Francisco. More than one-third of the space inside of the city’s office towers is sitting vacant due to increasing remote work in the wake of the pandemic...

Full story at <https://www.sfchronicle.com/realestate/article/uc-downtown-san-francisco-18605701.php>.

No Way Out (1950)

Monday, January 15, 2024



If you're looking for a movie related to Martin Luther King Day, here's one you probably never heard of. "No Way Out" was released in 1950 and is the first film starring Sidney Poitier. He plays a new doctor at a hospital assigned to the emergency room. Two White criminal brothers are brought into the ER after a shootout. One dies and the surviving brother blames the Poitier character, although he had correctly diagnosed that the dead brother was dying from a brain tumor. It's rather amazing that the film was released by a major studio in 1950 when the film could not be played in the Jim Crow south of that era and probably would have been rejected by theater owners in many areas outside the south. You can see the film - free on YouTube - at the link below. (Caution: Racist language)

Or direct to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gkIUIDEf9uM>.

Grateful

Tuesday, January 16, 2024



As we noted when we presented an analysis of the governor's budget proposal for 2024-25 last week, the UC prez always is "grateful" for what is proposed.* In this case, despite the fact that the increased allocation supposedly guaranteed by the compact is not included in the proposal, President Drake is indeed grateful. He notes that the missing allocation will - again supposedly - be included in the following year. In fact, there is no way of knowing whether that will happen. The budget is one year at a time and is ultimately enacted by the governor. The governor can subtract with his line-item veto but he can't add.

Unsaid is the fact that UC can lobby the legislature to include the deferral in the coming year, despite what the governor has proposed.

University of California President Michael V. Drake, M.D., today (Jan. 10) issued the following statement on Gov. Gavin Newsom's proposed 2024-25 budget:

"Governor Newsom's proposed budget reflects his recognition of the University of California's ongoing role in creating public good through research, public service and education. The University is a trust for every Californian. Despite a growing deficit and continued fiscal uncertainty, the governor is making thoughtful decisions during an extraordinarily difficult budget period by implementing but deferring a 5 percent funding increase pledged in the multi-year funding compact for the University. The University will receive two years' worth of state base budget increases in 2025-26. These decisions will position our state and its students for a prosperous future once budgetary challenges subside. During economic downturns, the University of California's role in California's economic development is even more important and we are grateful to state leaders for their visionary leadership and commitment to maintaining the funding compact. Through this funding, our campuses have been able to expand admission and enroll even more California students while also recruiting and retaining additional top-tier faculty.

"The University remains committed to the people of California and we will continue to make vital contributions to the lives of every Californian, as we have since our founding over 150 years ago — whether that's through our health enterprise, wildfire response, or through the discovery of clean energy at our national labs. We look forward to working with the state Legislature and Gov. Newsom in the months ahead to finalize a budget that sustains the University's research, public service and education mission."

Source: <https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/uc-statement-gov-newsoms->

2024-25-state-budget-proposal.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/01/the-governors-january-budget-proposal.html>.

Omitted from the LAO's Preliminary Comments

Tuesday, January 16, 2024



We earlier reviewed the governor's budget proposal for fiscal year 2024-25.* Traditionally, when the governor makes a proposal, the LAO provides initial comments and then subsequently provides more detailed reviews of particular components of the budget. The preliminary review is out and its macro message - which was known before - was that the governor's revenue estimates are more optimistic than those of the LAO. But, it also says the governor's estimates for revenue are within the bounds of reasonableness.

Much of the report, unfortunately, is devoted to the arcane subject of defining the problem which the news media sometimes misleadingly call the "deficit." For reasons we needn't go into here, that issue is largely irrelevant to good policy making and just contributes to confusion.

From the UC point of view, there is a glaring omission in the LAO's comments. The governor is deviating from the compact's "guarantee" to UC. He calls it a deferral, but whatever it is, it is a violation of the compact. Hopefully, when the LAO gets around to more detailed comments, it will go into that issue.

You can find the report at <https://lao.ca.gov/reports/2024/4825/2024-25-Overview-Governors-Budget-011324.pdf>.

Maybe not an advantage

Wednesday, January 17, 2024



Faithful blog readers will know that there was a point in the past when UCOP seemed to have a plan to replace all retiree health plans with a single Medicare Advantage program. After a fuss was raised, Medicare Advantage was offered as an option. Still it is an attractive option because of the lower cost. Experts have suggested that the lower cost arises because of overpayment by the federal government to the private providers of Medicare Advantage plans, with the risk that someday Congress will step in and cut the *de facto* subsidy.

As we have noted in prior posts, a majority of Medicare-eligibles are now in these privatized plans, probably a surprise to those who argue for "Medicare for All" as a public option for the general population. Here is (yet another) article on the subject from Newsweek:

In 2023, more than half of seniors were enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans. For many seniors, the plans hid some serious problems they only learned of later on. Seniors are routinely barraged with a range of Medicare Advantage ads, and they often sound too good to be true. Boasting better prices and a wide range of services, many seniors quickly decide to switch to a plan that saves them money upfront. "They're enticing because many do not charge premiums and include other services like dental care," attorney Loretta Kilday told Newsweek. "This simplicity and extra benefits prove to be a big draw, especially for people who do not have urgent health problems." ...

"Such plans tend to have small networks where specific services require prior approval, thus delaying treatment," Kilday said. "Seniors, especially when their health degrades more, they feel stuck in these plans."

According to a Senate Finance Committee report by Oregon Democratic U.S. Senator Ron Wyden, customer complaints about Medicare Advantage's marketing skyrocketed to double from 2020 to 2021, bringing the total to 41,000.

...And still, health insurance companies spend millions lobbying lawmakers, with one report finding \$33 million was spent by insurers in just the first three quarters of 2023. Some Americans might not even be aware of the difference between traditional Medicare and privately run Medicare Advantage plans due to how widespread the ads for the latter are. Those who do end up signing up for Medicare often don't realize they gave up the larger Medicare provider network and can no longer choose the doctor they'd like until it's too late.

...Those who need expensive medical care in Medicare Advantage often have to wait for prior authorization approval, which adds an obstacle to their healthcare, something the marketers never mention. One in five seniors reported issues getting care due to the prior approval process, according to a recent Retirement Living study. Another study found half of beneficiaries switched to a different plan after five years...

Full story at <https://www.newsweek.com/seniors-trapped-medicare-advantage-program-problems-1860014>.

Welcome to the Walled-off - Part 2

Wednesday, January 17, 2024



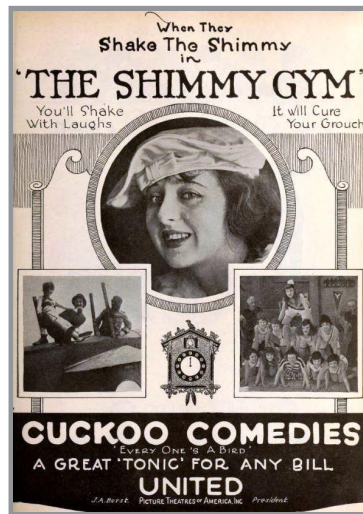
Berkeleyside reports that razor wire has been added to the top of the shipping container wall around the former People's Park. ... *UC Berkeley spokesperson Kyle Gibson said the "security wire" was installed on portions of the wall near buildings on the west side of the property, and would not fully encircle the site. Officials were concerned someone could scale those buildings, then have an easier time getting on top of the barrier that was constructed last week, Gibson said.*

"It's meant to prevent people from being able to easily climb on top of the containers," he said. "It's purely there for safety and security." ...

Full story at <https://www.berkeleyside.org/2024/01/11/berkeley-peoples-park-shipping-container-barbed-wire>.

Why state revenue seems unstable

Thursday, January 18, 2024



If you're wondering why the condition of the state budget seems to be doing the shimmy despite a relatively stable economy, it has a lot to do with California's tech industry and capital gains revenues therefrom. From the [Mercury News](#):

If you live in California, use tax-funded roads, schools and other services, you're on the Silicon Valley financial roller coaster whether you know it or not. The tech industry has contributed an increasing amount to the state budget, and even the way tech companies pay their employees has become a growing source of the state's income tax revenue, a new analysis shows. Many tech companies pay their employees base wages as well as stock options. Vested stock options — options that have matured and are fully owned by employees, who can choose to sell them — are treated like ordinary income for tax purposes. Companies must pay withholding taxes on part of that income to state and federal governments. Last year, those taxes paid by the four largest tech companies in the state — Apple, Google, Meta and Nvidia — grew to at least \$5 billion, making up more than 6% of all the state's income-tax withholding, the Legislative Analyst's Office estimated.

That's up from 4% to 5% pre-pandemic, has more than doubled since 2016 and quadrupled over the past decade. That increase has come as those companies have grown tremendously in market value — the four of them are now worth more than \$7 trillion. Last year, the withholding taxes they paid helped offset the effects of fewer initial public offerings on the state's revenue.

Chas Alamo, principal fiscal and policy analyst for the office, did the analysis. He said that if he had the resources to do a deeper dive and had tallied the stock-equity withholding from all large tech companies in the state instead of just the biggest four, it might make up as much as 10% of all income-tax withholding. That's on top of what the tech industry contributes to the state's personal income-tax revenue, which makes it even more dependent on tech's ups and downs. Historically, "withholding has been a stable barometer of how the state's economy is doing," Alamo said. "It hasn't been subject to the volatility of the stock market. But that has changed over the last several years."

All Californians have a stake in the health of the tech industry, because the state relies so heavily on personal income taxes for revenue. In light of a multibillion-dollar budget deficit and mixed signals around tech — which on the one hand continues to lay off employees but on the other hand is seeing an artificial-intelligence boom that has translated into gains on Wall Street — income-tax withholding from both tech employee wages as well as the withholding from their stock options matter more than ever.

...“The problem is it really disguises the true economy of California,” said Brooke Armour, president of the California Center for Jobs and the Economy. “When you have one small part of the economy that carries the state, that papers over the affordability crisis.”

Full story at <https://www.mercurynews.com/2024/01/16/tech-is-growing-as-a-source-of-california-tax-revenue-thats-the-good-news-and-the-bad-news/>.

Of course, volatility and the difficulty it poses for fiscal forecasting has an impact on the UC budget allocation from the state. The dependence on tech also explains why the governor tends to reject policies - such as the regulation of self-driving cars and AI - which tech moguls don't fancy.

Some wonder whether Gov. Newsom will want to propose some kind of major state fiscal reform before leaving office. He more or less said the answer is "no," even before taking office:

Or direct to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-SyZUolb7GU>.

Turmoil at the Faculty Club

Thursday, January 18, 2024



The Faculty Club seems to be in turmoil, at least at the governance level. It recently emailed members a timeline of the turmoil, reproduced below (with some annotations of "WHY?" by yours truly). But even with the timeline, exactly what is happening and WHY is unclear:

On January 10, 2024, the Faculty Club (FC) Board of Governors (BOG) held a Special one-item meeting per Bylaw Article IV, D-7. The meeting was announced via email to the FC members on January 3, and was held at the Faculty Club. It was also available to members via Zoom. The purpose of the meeting was to address the recent leadership transition, and it was led by Interim President, Linda Sarna, Distinguished Professor and Emerita Dean of the School of Nursing, former Chair of the Academic Senate (2012-2013), and a FC member for 32 years. The current elected and ex-officio BOG members were introduced along with General Manager Andrea Curthoys, who assumed her position in August, 2023. Gratitude was expressed for those participating on this voluntary governing board. The BOG's values of transparency, civility, excellence, sustainability and joy were shared with the members.

Chronology of Recent Events in the FC BOG:

In September, 2023, the prior President of the FC BOG resigned and chose not to assume the Past President position.

The FC Bylaws (Article IV, G-3a) state that "Ballots shall be delivered to eligible voters on or before April 26 and should be returned May 10." However, in 2023 that did not occur. [WHY?] The slate for nominations was not completed until October with final results announced November 30, 2023. The slate for President-Elect was blank. As a result, the December 7, 2023 meeting was the first FC BOG meeting for newly elected Board members.

On December 7, 2023 the new FC president told the BOG of her intent to resign during an Executive session. [WHY?]

As there was no President-Elect or Past President to step into a leadership position, the BOG held an emergency meeting on December 13, 2023 to discuss the situation. At that meeting they agreed to formally accept the President's resignation.

According to the FC Bylaws (Article IV-G), suggestions to the BOG for filling vacancies would typically be made by the Nominations and Elections Committee, however that committee was not fully operational. The BOG is empowered to appoint and fill vacancies as soon as possible. Thus, the Board appointed Linda Sarna as Interim.

A Special one-item meeting was planned to be held in early January to announce the leadership transition, and to announce openings for other BOG Interim appointments (i.e., President-Elect, Member-at Large).

As per BOG recommendations, former FC President, M. Belinda Tucker was invited and accepted an Invitation to serve as Interim Past President to fill that position. The appointment was approved electronically by the BOG on December 18.

As membership on various committees of the BOG had not been filled, this was a top priority for the BOG and the Interim President.

At the Special Meeting on January 10th, an appeal was made for members willing to be considered for appointment to an interim position for President-Elect and for member-at-large (since that position had previously been held by Sarna).

FC committees are now filled pending the Nominations committee which requires three outside FC members. The Interim President-Elect will serve as the Chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee

A full description of the roles in the Bylaws can be found on the website. Next week, a follow-up article in the newsletter will also highlight these responsibilities.

The FC members are urged to send any suggestions, as well as self-nominations for Interim President-elect and Member-at-large to the Interim President at lsarna@sonnet.ucla.edu.

Three FC members who are not serving on the BOG are also needed for appointment to the Nominations and Elections Committee. Being a member of that committee does not preclude running for office. These suggestions also can be sent to the Interim President at lsarna@sonnet.ucla.edu. It is hoped that all open appointments can be made by the end of January at the next BOG meeting.

The next FC BOG elections will occur in April, 2024 with a slate to be approved at the March, 2024 meeting. All Interim appointments will terminate on August, 31, 2024.

Interim appointments must stand for election if they wish to continue their service. The slate with balanced representation from academic units and from faculty and staff will be required to replace 8 members of the BOG:

President-Elect

President

Past President

Treasurer

Member-at-large (Sarna who vacated this spot to serve as Interim President)

Member-at-large (currently Dunkel Schetter)

Member-at-large (currently Epstein)

Member-at-large (currently Becerra)

Note: Current BOG members may run for re-election, but per the Bylaws, no BOG member can serve for more than 6 consecutive years. After a one-year time period, prior BOG members can run again.

All terms will begin September 1, 2024 with an orientation scheduled for early Fall. A follow-up [email] will detail the roles and responsibilities of the various positions. The Interim President strongly urged members at the meeting on January 11 to consider participation in the FC during this very important time in the FC's history.

As this was a Special one-item meeting, questions from members about other issues were deferred by the Interim President until the General FC member's meeting on February 1. That meeting will provide an opportunity to address the state of the FC including ongoing challenges and new opportunities. The meeting will be in-person at FC and via Zoom. Details will be forthcoming.

What the Walled-Off (People's Park) is Eventually Supposed to Look ...

Friday, January 19, 2024



Student Housing



Separate Affordable Housing



Walkway

Source: <https://news.berkeley.edu/2022/08/03/peoples-park-media-fact-sheet>.

Online Ed at the Regents Next Week

Friday, January 19, 2024



As we previously noted, among the topics to be discussed at the Regents next week is the scope of online education at UC. The issue comes up in two places. One is a general discussion of what is being offered at Academic and Student Affairs. In a later full board session, the more controversial issue of how much strictly online education will be allowed toward degrees.*

The agenda item says UC has offered "online" courses since the 1970s - probably a stretch of the word "online" to include some form of remote education.** There have been TV courses in higher ed since the 1950s, radio courses before that, and correspondence courses (postal mail) still earlier.*** However, a list of all UC courses has been posted for the various campuses including UCLA. You can see the list at:

<https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/jan24/a3attach1.pdf> [Scroll down until you get to the UCLA offerings.]

You'll find some standard stuff, e.g., basic economics, genetics, more obscure offerings, e.g., Amharic, and pop stuff, e.g., Reel Beatles: Understanding the Beatles through Film and Me. The table does not indicate what the enrollments are in the various courses. And it does not indicate how much instructor time was involved in creating and delivering the courses.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/01/lots-of-interesting-topics-in-upcoming.html>.

** <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/jan24/a3.pdf>.

*** <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2020/03/return-of-straight-lecture.html>; <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/1950s-tv-show-set-stage-modern-distance-learning-180976734>; https://archive.org/details/youtube--_LpAu8kbXI.

But apart from that Chancellors Block and Crist...

Friday, January 19, 2024



While you are pondering exactly how UCLA is going to finance its various real estate deals (including the \$700 million Westside Pavillion purchase), you might let your mind drift towards athletics where we are supposed to be turning a profit. From the Mercury News:

Months away from joining new conferences, UCLA and Cal might consider changing school colors before going their merry ways. A deep red hue seems appropriate. The Bruins and Bears continue to bleed cash as they prepare for life in the Big Ten and ACC, respectively. According to documents obtained by the Hotline, the two athletic departments posted a combined deficit of more than \$80 million in the 2023 fiscal year when support from central campus is removed from the equation.

Without a course change, the grim financial trajectories in Westwood and Berkeley could undermine success on the field (and court) in their new leagues against peers with stronger fiscal foundations. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, the Bruins reported revenues of \$105.4 million and expenses of \$142 million — a deficit of \$36.6 million. The revenue total represents a 2.2 percent year-over-year increase while the expense figure marks a jump of 8.2 percent. No single item accounts for the uptick in UCLA's operational expenses. However, the lifting of COVID restrictions and a change in the football schedule, which resulted in eight home games during the 2022 season, were key contributors.

Regardless of specifics, the bottom line is all too familiar for the Bruins, who reported a \$28 million deficit in the 2022 fiscal year and were running deep in the red before COVID hit. "Like other athletic departments, financial challenges remain as a result of the pandemic which impacted revenue streams such as sponsorships and media rights," the Bruins said in a statement issued to the Hotline.

"In this evolving college landscape, we have continued to emphasize putting our student-athletes first. This includes increasing our investments in student-athlete focused areas including mental health, team travel, nutrition and academic awards. "We will always put our student-athletes first and provide a world-class holistic athletic and academic experience."

The situation in Berkeley appears significantly more dire. The Bears reported revenues of \$126.1 million and expenses of \$134.9 million in the 2023 fiscal year, a deficit of \$8.8 million. Those figures represent year-over-year increases of 6.6 percent (revenue) and 17.8 percent (expenses). That eye-opening surge includes a \$6.5 million increase in

costs for coaching and administrative salaries — the Bears fired one men’s basketball staff and hired a new one — and a doubling of the dollars spent on fundraising and marketing, to \$8.1 million, that was partly due to efforts related to the football game at Notre Dame in the fall of 2022.

What’s more, Cal’s revenue includes a whopping \$36.7 million in direct support from campus — that’s 29 percent of the total revenue and a \$5.7 million increase in raw dollars over the support level provided in the 2022 fiscal year. (The revenue figure excludes \$3.4 million that the Bears transferred back to campus as part of an internal financial structure.) ...

Full story at <https://www.mercurynews.com/2024/01/17/financial-challenges-intensify-for-ucla-cal-with-several-daunting-hurdles-ahead/>.

Nasty Things Seem to Be Happening at UC-San Diego

Friday, January 19, 2024



From NBC San Diego: *Disgraced former County Supervisor Nathan Fletcher is facing more harassment allegations.* And this time, he and the County of San Diego are accused of retaliation. The complaint filed in court alleges the county and Nathan Fletcher — a county supervisor at the time — retaliated against UC San Diego professor Juli Hinds in April of 2023, after she reported a student's harassment claims against him.***

*Court documents detail how Hinds informed university administrators at UCSD's Office of Student Disability Services that a student had reported "harassing conduct" from Fletcher.*** Fletcher was UCSD's first professor of practice in political science in 2013. It's when a retired or practicing professional teaches through expertise, without a traditional academic background or credentials. Before that, he had served two terms in the California Assembly.*

Hinds stated, in the following days, the county began to end county contracts she was working on. Complaint documents state that "the County of San Diego tortiously interfered with contractual and economic relationships of claimant Juli Beth Hinds, causing her economic damages." It alleges she was terminated from county contracted projects with UCSD focused on the implementation of the county's Regional Decarbonization Framework and preparation of the Regional Water Equity Report.

Hinds is listed in the complaint as a staff research associate and lecturer in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at UCSD and principal of Birchline Planning LLC.

The county of San Diego is not providing comment at this time.

Source: <https://www.nbcsandiego.com/news/local/county-accused-of-retaliation-after-professor-reported-complaint-against-nathan-fletcher/3407705/>.

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*Information on Fletcher's career and current problems at at

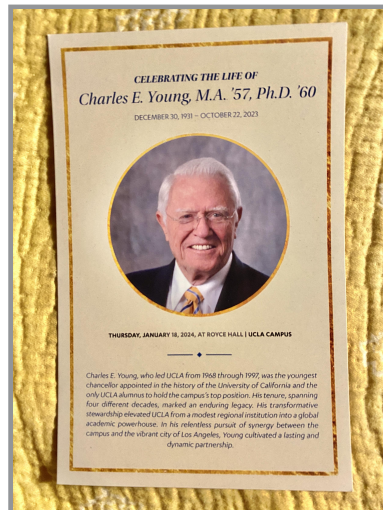
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nathan_Fletcher.

**Hinds is not a professor but is a lecturer:
<https://usp.ucsd.edu/people/faculty/profiles/beth-juli.html>.

***Note that university rules generally require such reporting. One wonders what legal support UC-San Diego is thus providing.

Amateur Photos from Memorial for Chancellor Charles Young: Jan. 18,...

Friday, January 19, 2024



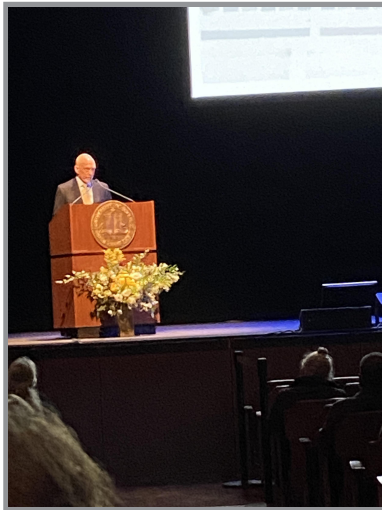
Cover of program. Full program agenda at bottom. Scroll down.



Musical interlude



Chancellor Block



Ted Mitchell



Carole Goldberg



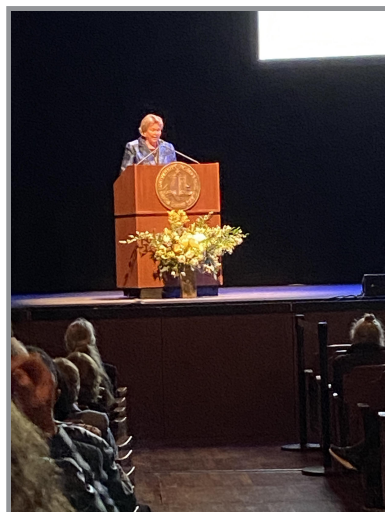
Zev Yaroslavsky



Keith Parker



Musical interlude



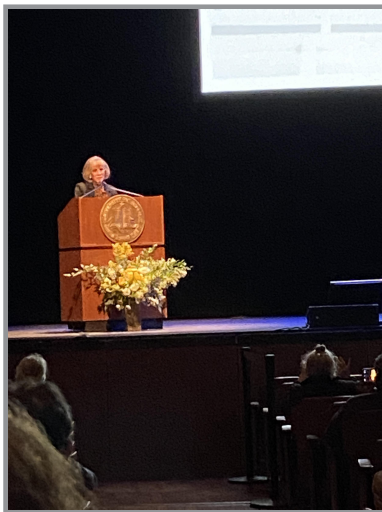
Ann Meyers Drysdale



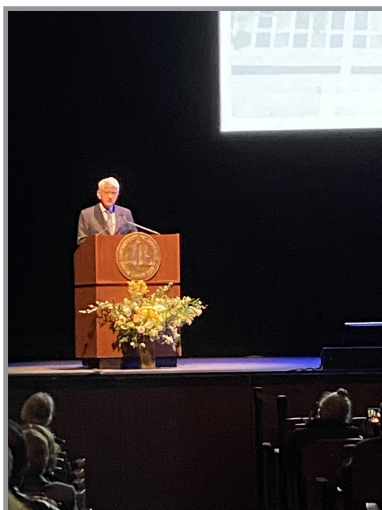
Ralph Ochoa



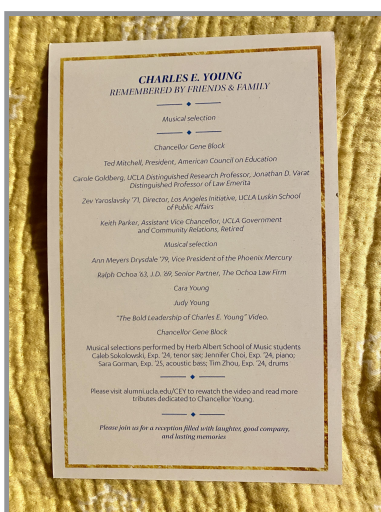
Cara Young



Judy Young



Chancellor Block



Program Agenda

New Police Chief Appointment

Saturday, January 20, 2024



From the Bruin: *The current interim chief of police John Thomas will serve as UCLA's new chief of police. Thomas, who attended UCLA from 1980 to 1984, has served as UCLA's interim chief of police since December 2022. The previous chief of police, Tony Lee, retired in 2022 after serving since 2017.*

Thomas previously held positions at the University of Southern California's Department of Public Safety from 2006 to 2022, including police captain, assistant chief, executive director and chief, and was also a special advisor to the senior vice president for administration...

Additionally, Thomas was deputy chief of police and emergency management at the University of the District of Columbia from 2005 to 2006. He has also served in various positions in the LAPD, achieving the rank of lieutenant, according to a campuswide email...

Full story at <https://dailybruin.com/2024/01/11/john-thomas-named-as-uclas-new-chief-of-police>.

Maybe Not an Advantage - Part 2

Saturday, January 20, 2024



Last Wednesday we noted that there are significant questions about the seemingly-cheap Medicare Advantage plans over the longer term. Barrons suggests that the longer term may be arriving:

America's health insurance giants have gone all-in on the government-funded Medicare Advantage program over the past decade, reshaping their businesses to capture the profits it promised. Now, a sharp spike in hospital and doctor office visits among older Americans is raising questions about whether a program that once seemed to promise growth for the sector might emerge as a major liability.

Managed-care companies are reporting that seniors on Medicare Advantage plans used far more medical services than expected in the final months of 2023. The announcements have sparked two separate selloffs over the past week: The first came Jan. 12, when UnitedHealth Group announced its fourth-quarter earnings. The second came Thursday, after Humana laid out preliminary fourth-quarter results, and said the high utilization trends would have a material impact on its 2024 performance "if current trends continue." ...

It's hard to overstate how far the insurers have gone to cater to Medicare Advantage: CVS spent \$10.6 billion to acquire Oak Street Health, a primary care chain that focuses on Medicare Advantage patients, while UnitedHealth has built out a large chain of healthcare providers under its Optum Health division. But the high utilization rates announced over the past week show how Medicare Advantage can also be a lead weight. While the federal government pays large premiums, they are fixed, which means the companies carry significant risk if medical costs come in higher than expected. The companies might be able to compensate for higher utilization over time—either by extracting better terms from the federal government or by cutting benefits...

Full story at <https://www.barrons.com/articles/humana-stock-unitedhealth-cvs-medicare-advantage-ea828e53>.

Regental Policy on Departmental Website Use

Saturday, January 20, 2024



There is now more detail available on the Regents' upcoming agenda. One of the issues to be taken up is the use of departmental websites for political statements. The Academic Senate dealt with this issue in the past and came up with guidelines for such use. However, the guidelines were not mandates and generally seem not to have been followed.

The Regents will take up the issue of departmental political statements at their upcoming meeting. More details on the policy to be proposed by the Regents are now available on the agenda.*

The introductory material to the Regents item indicates that official departmental websites are maintained only to provide information on courses, events, etc., and that other use conveys to the public that the views expressed are official university opinions:

... Expressions of the personal or collective opinions of unit members or of the entity is not the official business of the entity. Other means of publicly conveying such opinions are available. Individual or group statements that are posted on the University's official channels of communication are likely to be interpreted by the public and the community as the University's institutional views, as opposed to individual or group speech. To avoid any such confusion, the proposed Regents Policy would provide that the official channels of communication to conduct the business of the University should not be used for purposes of publicly expressing the personal or collective opinions of unit members or of the entity...

The actual proposal to be voted on reads:

Regents Policy on Use of University Administrative Websites

POLICY TEXT

Upholding the values of freedom of speech and inquiry are core to the University of California's mission. Under the First Amendment and principles of academic freedom, faculty members, individually and collectively, have the right to express their views. While

individual members of the University community are free to express constitutionally protected viewpoints through all non-official channels of communication, they may not associate the official administrative units of the University with their personal viewpoints. Long-standing principles of academic freedom have recognized that when faculty members speak or write as citizens, they should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution.

The University of California establishes websites and other official channels of communication maintained by the schools, departments, centers, units, and other entities for purposes of conducting the official business of the University and these entities. Examples of an entity's official business may include delivering informational resources about the unit, such as course descriptions, and communicating personnel changes, dates of upcoming events, the release of new publications, the issuance of new policies, and similar activities. The official channels of communication, including the main landing pages of websites, of schools, departments, centers, units, and other entities should not be used for purposes of publicly expressing the personal or collective opinions of unit members or of the entity, as other means of publicly conveying such opinions are available.

Notwithstanding the above, the Chair of the Board of Regents, the President, the Chancellors, and the leadership of the Academic Senate, may use the official channels of communication to comment on matters of University or public import, and such use by these spokespersons shall be deemed to be conducting official University business for purposes of this policy.

Nothing in this policy shall limit the use of any privately-maintained resource or other nonUniversity media by any member of the University community for any purpose. This policy shall be construed in a manner consistent with the First Amendment and other applicable laws.

COMPLIANCE/DELEGATION

Any questions concerning the application of this policy shall be referred to the administrator responsible for maintaining the website and such administrator shall be responsible for assuring compliance with this policy.

NO RIGHT OF ACTION

This policy is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the University of California or its Board of Regents, individual Regents, officers, employees, or agents.

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* <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/jan24/j3.pdf>.

** <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/jan24/j3attach1.pdf>.

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Note that the proposed policy could be enacted as currently worded, modified, or rejected during the discussion.

Regental Discussion of Faculty Disciplinary Process

Saturday, January 20, 2024



At the November 2023 Regents meetings, Regent Pérez asked that there be a review of faculty discipline procedures and the role of the Regents therein at the upcoming January meetings.

The agenda for the session at which that discussion will take place now contains a detailed document which describes the disciplinary process. The document is a discussion item only. No change in policy is included as an action item.

Pérez did not say *why* he wanted the matter reviewed back in November. It is possible that some faculty actions taken in the context of current campus tensions over the Israel-Gaza War were the motivation, but presumably he will reveal his concerns during the discussion.

You can find the item listing the disciplinary procedures at:

<https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/jan24/b1.pdf>.

Mystery Item Again on the Regents' Agenda

Sunday, January 21, 2024



From time to time, a mystery item appears on agendas of Regents meetings: "Pension Administration Project." No one will say exactly what it is, but it appears and reappears in closed-door sessions. The meetings this week are no exception. Does it have something to do with RASC and its varied problems? Something else?

If you are a fly on the wall at the closed-door session of the Compliance and Audit Committee on January 24th, do let us know what you find out.*

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* <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/jan24/audit.pdf>.

Award for Kent Wong

Sunday, January 21, 2024



From UCLA Newsroom: *Kent Wong, who led the work of the UCLA Labor Center for over 30 years and now serves as the center's project director for labor and community partnerships, was presented with the John Allen Buggs Leadership Award by the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission on Jan. 16 for his longtime human relations advocacy and leadership.*

The recognition was part of the commission's John Anson Ford Awards ceremony, an annual event that honors human relations champions throughout the county. In a press release on the awards, the commission lauded Wong for devoting "his entire adult life to bringing together workers and communities of all backgrounds to stand up for social justice, fair wages, and humane working conditions."

"I am humbled to receive the John Allen Buggs Leadership Award," Wong said during his video acceptance speech. "I am so fortunate to play a small role in this vibrant labor movement to advance worker rights, immigrant rights, human and civil rights."

Under Wong's leadership from 1992 to 2023, the UCLA Labor Center expanded its staff from 3 to 40 members, becoming nationally and internationally recognized for its efforts to advance worker justice. In 2021, with the support of state Sen. María Elena Durazo, the center secured funding from the Legislature to establish a permanent home in MacArthur Park and to name the historic building in honor of worker and civil rights icon Rev. James Lawson Jr...

Full story at <https://newsroom.ucla.edu/stories/ucla-kent-wong-honored-by-county-with-human-relations-award>.

Blackstone REIT Still Draining - Part 12

Monday, January 22, 2024



As blog readers will know, from time to time we have raised questions about the Blackstone Real Estate Investment Trust, UC's chief investment officer put \$4.5 billion as a kind of bailout as the BREIT was experiencing a slow-motion run on the bank. In exchange, we got a "guaranteed" 11.25% return, presumably at the expense of other BREIT investors.

Usually, high returns come with risk, but there was very little questioning about this investment by the Regents, other than whether BREIT was a nice landlord. (BREIT's PR team testified at a Regents meeting that it was nice.) But now comes word that a year later, month by month, the slow motion run continued, i.e., there were more requests for withdrawals than the BREIT would permit:

BREIT's returns fell short of the 5% annual gain threshold that enables the firm to take a share of profits, Bloomberg reports. For the first time, the trust missed the target to earn carried interest, which incentivizes deal-makers and rewards them for generating returns.

At one point, the nontraded REIT catering to affluent investors sat on \$70B in value. It was a favorite of financial advisers and individual investors alike as it bet big on favored property sectors.

But the trust took a hit in December, posting a 1.2% loss due to hedges that dropped in value when borrowing rates declined in late 2023, according to Bloomberg. Blackstone deployed interest rate hedges to ease the pain from an uptick in borrowing costs...

Last month, the trust received \$1.1B in redemption requests, down 41% from November and 80% from the redemption peak in January 2023. BREIT began limiting redemptions in late 2022 and kept those limits in place in 2023.

Full story at <https://www.bisnow.com/national/news/commercial-real-estate/breit-records-worst-annual-return-in-its-history-122438>.

As we have said umpteen times, the issue is not whether or not eventually it will turn out that UC made money on the deal. The question concerns the methodology by which the risk-return trade-off was made and whether the set-up for making such evaluation is prudent. It appears that the "methodology" was that the chief investment officer heard about the run and, on his own motion, decided to put billions into BREIT after a chat with

BREIT's CEO.

Inquiring minds want to know...

Monday, January 22, 2024



From a recent email by the chair of the UCLA Academic Senate sent to all Senate members: ... *By now, many of you have seen the announcement that UCLA acquired the former Westside Pavilion shopping mall for development as a UCLA Research Park, which will house the California Institute for Immunology and Immunotherapy at UCLA and the UCLA Center for Quantum Science and Engineering. This is the third property acquisition for UCLA in 15 months (in addition to the Trust Building in downtown Los Angeles and the UCLA South Bay Campus in Palos Verdes and San Pedro).*

*While each of these properties are tied to the academic mission of research, teaching and service (which should also inform decision making regarding their use), **many of you may be asking how we can afford these acquisitions in the context of the recent labor contract for graduate student academic employees, the modest salary increases for faculty (which were offset for many by increases in health insurance costs) and other financial challenges to campus. It's a fair question, and one that the Senate leadership has raised. It will be important to involve faculty in decision-making for each of these properties, and to be transparent about both the short- and long-term costs and benefits of these acquisitions. We've encouraged administration to seek input from faculty in the process of campus expansion to ensure we are prioritizing the academic mission and serving all parts of campus. We encourage you to send questions to your Legislative Assembly (LgA) representatives (Chancellor Block and EVCP Hunt will present at the LgA meeting on February 8, 2024), to attend any information sessions about the acquisitions and to otherwise engage on envisioning how these properties can be best utilized to support research, teaching and service ...***

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We look forward to February 8 when all will be revealed...or will it?

NCAA Trying to Regain Control

Tuesday, January 23, 2024



Inside Higher Ed ran an article on the NCAA's efforts in Congress to get control of NIL (name, image, likeness) payments to student athletes. By allowing NIL, the Supreme Court opened the door to payments to such athletes which in turn cracked open the door to considering them as employees.

A House subcommittee is moving forward on a bill that would create national rules of the road to rein in the growing name, image and likeness "Wild West" in college sports. The House Innovation, Data and Commerce Subcommittee heard testimony and feedback on a draft version of the legislation Thursday. The hearing was the 11th Congress has held about the NIL rights of student athletes, but the first one focused on a specific piece of legislation—showing some forward progress on an issue that's the top legislative priority for the National Collegiate Athletic Association...

Since 2021, college athletes have been able to sign deals with businesses and other entities to make money off their names, images and likenesses. This has led to a patchwork of state laws outlining NIL rights for students, which the NCAA says creates an uneven playing field. Meanwhile, leading athletes have cashed in, some earning more than \$1 million a year. However, the windfall hasn't been evenly felt across sports and institutions, fueling concerns that NIL could jeopardize non-revenue-generating sports...

*The NCAA... wants Congress to affirm that student athletes are not employees of an institution, which the association says is critical. Some student athletes have sought to unionize in recent years, arguing that they are employees with collective bargaining rights, while the NCAA says they are amateurs and not able to form a union. A federal lawsuit, *Johnson v. NCAA*, filed in 2019 also argues that student athletes are employees. A decision in favor of the plaintiffs could spell the end of the amateur model. "It's the No. 1 priority for the NCAA; they are deathly afraid of employee status for college athletes," said Ehrlich of Boise State. "It really feels to me like they're reaching out to the federal government to make their lives easier." ...*

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/government/2024/01/19/draft-nil-bill-aims-save-college-sports-we-know-it>.

Given the current dysfunction in Congress, it seems unlikely that this bill will be enacted anytime soon, if ever.

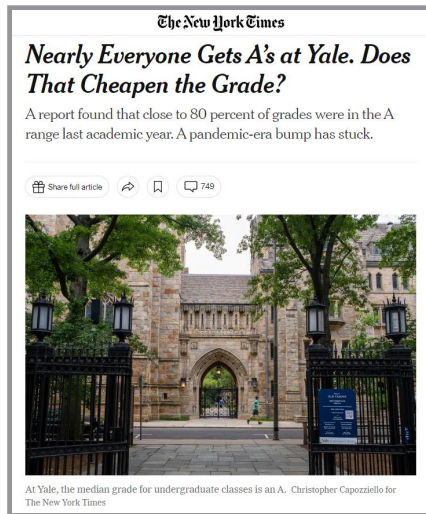
As we noted in a prior post, the economic model for college sports at UCLA (and elsewhere) is under strain.* The Regents' committee to deal with student athletics is meeting today. Whether anyone will bring up the NIL issue is unknown.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/01/but-apart-from-that-chancellors-block.html>.

Is Berkeley Catching Up with Yale?

Tuesday, January 23, 2024



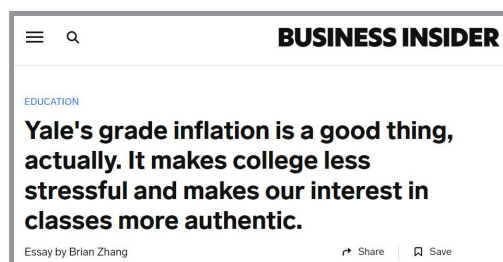
Back in early December, the NY Times ran a piece revealing that almost everyone at Yale gets an A or A-.* Now the San Francisco Chronicle indicates Berkeley is moving in Yale's direction:

Nearly two-thirds of all grades given to undergraduates at UC Berkeley were A's or A minuses last year, representing a significant increase from a decade ago. Data published by UC Berkeley shows that while grade inflation accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is a prolonged trend, with average grades at Berkeley inching higher each year over the past decade.

About 64% of grades given to undergraduates were A's or A minuses in 2022 (which includes the spring and fall semesters). While this share of A's is lower than its pandemic peak of 77% in 2020, it's up 13 percentage points from 10 years ago. The pandemic-induced surge in A's is primarily a result of changes in the school's grading policies during this period, according to Oliver O'Reilly, vice provost for undergraduate education and a mechanical engineering professor at Berkeley. Students could opt for a pass/fail grading system instead of receiving letter grades in most classes, and they were able to make this choice at any point during the semester...

Full story at <https://www.sfchronicle.com/projects/2023/uc-berkeley-grade-inflation/>.

But at least one Yalie thinks everyone getting an A is a Good Thing:**



So maybe we shouldn't worry.

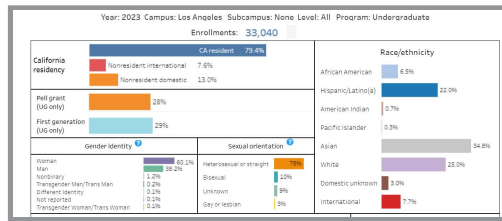
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* <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/05/nyregion/yale-grade-inflation.html>.

**h <https://www.businessinsider.com/yale-grade-inflation-good-student-college-stress-2023-12>.

The UCLA Numbers

Wednesday, January 24, 2024



Given the legislature's and governor's preoccupation with UCLA enrollments, particularly undergraduate, we have provided the highlights above. More detail is available for UC as a whole, other campuses, and other data cuts at:

<https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/about-us/information-center/fall-enrollment-glance>.

There's always something...

Wednesday, January 24, 2024



Remember Yik Yak, an anonymous social media posting site aimed at college students that (inevitably, it seems) ended up with hate speech, etc. Now we have a relatively new one in the news - Sidechat. From Inside Higher Ed today:

Harvard University has asked the leaders of a social media app that allows anonymous posting to tamp down on “concerning content” following student complaints of antisemitic messages. University officials met with the app Sidechat’s team this month, asking them to do more to monitor and moderate content, Harvard said in a statement to Inside Higher Ed. Sidechat assured Harvard that it will monitor posts to ensure they follow its terms of use and community guidelines. The move comes only weeks after Harvard president Claudine Gay resigned in the wake of a U.S. House of Representatives hearing on antisemitism in higher education.

Sidechat has played a role in the recent tensions over antisemitism at Harvard. In a Jan. 9 letter, Virginia Foxx, Republican chairwoman of the House Education and Workforce Committee, pointed out Sidechat’s potentially problematic posts. She requested that Harvard produce posts “by Harvard students, faculty, staff, and other Harvard affiliates on Sidechat and other social media platforms targeting Jews, Israelis, Israel, Zionists, or Zionism.” Sidechat co-founder Sebastian Gil said in an email that Harvard is the only university to ask the app to increase its moderation. He said his company does “more than most (if not all) social media apps in moderation,” pointing to a moderation team of 30 employees and the company’s use of machine learning models to “detect bigotry.” ...

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/tech-innovation/2024/01/24/harvard-seeks-oversight-sidechat-app-after-antisemitic-posts>.

No, yours truly has not downloaded Sidechat and joined whatever there is for UCLA. Yik Yak was sufficient, back in the day, to tell him the answer to "What could possibly go wrong?"

Note: The image above is from <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/27/style/sidechat-app-college.html>.

Now It Is revealed...

Wednesday, January 24, 2024



The Regents at one point seemed excited about the idea that UC could hire undocumented students, thanks to a loophole in federal law. They formed a committee to study the issue, but then delayed its decision. Now they are supposed to make a decision on Thursday. Maybe. In any event, [Politico](#) has an explanation for the delay.

The Biden administration has quietly pushed back against a plan by the University of California to allow thousands of young people without legal immigration status to hold campus jobs. Through a series of recent calls, the Department of Homeland Security pressed UC officials to reconsider what it saw as a direct challenge to federal law during an election year, according to four university officials.

The governing Board of Regents is expected to discuss the proposal on Thursday and could even approve it — amid pressure from pro-immigrant activists who are increasingly concerned about what may happen to the students, and other undocumented people, if former President Donald Trump is reelected. About 4,000 current students could benefit from the change.

...The proposal would challenge a 1986 federal law prohibiting people without immigration status from legally working. The UC seeks to create an exception for people who were largely brought to the U.S. by their parents as children and would previously have been allowed to work under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA. Students without legal immigration status already attend the University of California while paying in-state tuition.

DHS officials, concerned about a breach of federal law, warned the university that the Biden administration might be forced to sue or take administrative action blocking the effort if the proposal was approved — teeing up an awkward confrontation at a time when the president is already under fire over immigration. People familiar with the discussions say that — because of the legal uncertainty — approval from the regents is in question despite interest in helping undocumented students among some on the board. The panel is made up of Democratic appointees and prominent elected state officials including Gov. Gavin Newsom and Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas.

"It's complicated because it's an election year and because of all the legal issues," said

one UC official involved with the negotiations. That official, and others, were granted anonymity to discuss internal conversations.

...Board members, UC President Michael V. Drake and other university officials have grown increasingly skeptical because of the federal pushback and after reviewing outside legal opinions, according to people familiar with the discussion who were granted anonymity to discuss internal deliberations. "Their main question is: 'Why now?'" a UC official said of the Biden administration's position...

Full story at <https://www.politico.com/news/2024/01/24/biden-undocumented-immigrants-university-of-california-00137449>.

Kamala Harris Potential Traffic Jam This Afternoon

Wednesday, January 24, 2024



Patch newspapers report that Vice President will be in town late this afternoon for a fundraiser, possibly also traveling to Brentwood, and potentially causing a traffic jam in the UCLA area or on routes to and from UCLA.

As usual, exact travel plans are not being revealed. That's all we know.

See <https://patch.com/california/santamonica/s/iugao/vice-president-kamala-harris-heads-to-la-expect-traffic-delays>.

Watch the Regents Special Committee on Athletics, Jan. 23, 2024

Thursday, January 25, 2024



On the first day of the three-day Regents meeting, the Special Committee on Athletics that was set up in the aftermath of the brouhaha caused by UCLA changing athletic conferences and the impact on UC-Berkeley.

There was, however, a public comment period in which all of the comments were directed towards issues other than athletics. Most of the comments involved the delayed regental decision on whether it would be legal to provide UC employment opportunities to undocumented students. Since the Regents committee studying that issue has been meeting behind closed doors, the source of the delay is unknown. A surmise would be that the general counsel has raised some doubts about the legality of the proposal.

In any event, there were several speakers on that topic and a threat of a hunger strike. One speaker talked in favor of UC-San Francisco reinstating mask requirements. A UCLA student complained of antisemitism on that campus and proposed training about antisemitism as part of the DEI program and penalties for disruptive unauthorized activities.

The committee then heard reports on student athletic programs at UC-Santa Barbara and other campuses but not UCLA and Berkeley, i.e., not from the two campuses who were at the heart of the above-mentioned controversy - mainly because of the large dollars involved at those two campuses. Chancellors from the other campuses all said athletics was very important but there were important differences in where the revenue came from to support athletics, i.e., student fees vs. direct campus allocations.

As always we preserve the videos of the Regents since they have no policy with regard to duration of preservation. You can see the hearing at:

<https://archive.org/details/special-committee-on-athletics>.

Committee Discussion on Use of Dept. Websites

Thursday, January 25, 2024



Normally, we review Regents meetings as a group, either as a day or morning and afternoon sessions. However, one of the controversial topics taken up yesterday - the use of departmental websites to represent official views of the department - was up for discussion at a joint meeting of Academic and Student Affairs Committee & Compliance and Audit which ran on beyond 6 pm.

As it turned out, there were lots of ambiguities that surfaced.

The policy as it stood at that session involved what could be put on the "landing page" of a department. It was unclear what the definition of a landing page was.

Given some definition of landing page, it was unclear the degree to which the policy applied to secondary pages that might be linked to a landing page.

There was one option discussed that when a political statement appeared on a secondary page, it should be explicitly labeled as "opinion."

It was said that if the policy was adopted and ambiguities arose, chancellors would have to set up a process to "call balls and strikes." Some kind of process for review would be needed. Perhaps there should be a report back to the Regents after some period of time as to how the process was working.

It was suggested that perhaps there should be an exemption for webpages of student government and the alumni association.

The representative of ethnic studies indicated he could live with the opinion page option despite reservations. He said the issue had become tangled with current external political divisions in society.

Regent Pérez said that the chair of the working group that drafted the policy - Regent Sures with the help of the general counsel - should come back to the full board today with a redrafted policy that took account of all the comments. The Regents could then decide what to do. Regent Park seemed to endorse the Pérez idea and noted that the UC diversity policy involved teaching people to get along with others.

Faculty representative Steintrager complained that the policy was too ambiguous. Regent Sures remarked that Steintrager had been part of the working group and never objected. Why was he objecting now? The exchange was testy.

One issue not discussed was the potential coercive effect of official departmental statements - wherever expressed - on junior faculty, students, staff, and job applicants who might have differing views.

In short, the meeting closed without a vote but with instructions for Sures and the general counsel to come back today with a revision. As of 8 am today, it is unknown as to whether a revision had been circulated to the Regents. There is nothing new on the webpage with the Regents' agenda. Possibly, however, paper versions have been distributed to members of the board.

As always, we preserve recordings of Regents meetings since the Regents have no policy on duration of retention. You can see this particular session at:

https://ia601300.us.archive.org/29/items/governance-committee-1-24-2024-pm/Joint%20Meetings_%20ASAC%20%26%20Compliance%20and%20Audit%2C%20ASAC%20%26%20Finance%20and%20Capital%20Strategies%201-24-2024%20pm.mp4.

Follow up on discussion of use of dept. websites

Friday, January 26, 2024



Yesterday, we got ahead of our usual review of Regents meeting and discussed Wednesday's committee discussion of the use of departmental websites for political statements, known as Item J3 on the agenda.* That session ended with instruction for the working group's chair to come back with a policy statement that dealt with a variety of ambiguities and issues raised.

At the full board meeting, Regent Pérez asked that the board table J3 until it had gotten as thorough a review as another item dealing with whether UC could hire undocumented students. That item was under review by a special committee and was delayed. As blog readers will know, there are reports that the delay was due to legal issues and political concerns coming from the Biden administration**

The discussion was interrupted by an anti-Israel demonstration. After the room was cleared and the program resumed, the discussion on the motion to table started again. This time the motion was not geared to the timeframe of the undocumented student hiring issue. Instead, it was simply to defer consideration of J3 until the March Regents meetings. It passed despite some negative votes and abstentions.

As always, we preserve recordings of Regents meeting since the Regents have no policy on duration of retention. You can see the relevant portions of the morning segment of the Regents meeting at the link below:

<https://ia601306.us.archive.org/11/items/board-1-25-2024-am/Board%201-25-2024%20AM.mp4>

The initial Pérez motion to table linked to the undocumented issue is at 1:00:52

The resumption after the demonstration with the motion to postpone until March is at 1:22:26.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/01/committee-discussion-on-use-of-dept.html>.

** <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/01/now-it-is-revealed.html>.

The rest of Thursday's Dysfunctional Regents Meeting

Friday, January 26, 2024



Our previous post covered a portion of the Regents meeting yesterday dealing with the use of UC websites for departmental political statements. In the end, the Regents deferred that issue to March. However, as noted, Regent Pérez at one point connected the website matter - which had a lot of loose ends - with another issue on the agenda: the possibility of UC hiring undocumented students. He noted that the undocumented issue had gone through extensive legal review. We'll come back to that linkage below.

The Thursday morning session began with public comment, most of which consisted of anti-Israel statements, demands for divestment, etc. But there was also reference to the undocumented issue and to pay determination for nonunion employees. The prior post dealt with website issue so there is no need to repeat the summary here. After public comment, Regent Pérez asked that item B1 dealing with faculty discipline for misconduct be put at the end of the agenda if time permitted. That move, which was done at his behest since he had put B1 on the agenda back in November, was likely to kill B1 since meetings often run out of time. It wasn't clear what had motivated Pérez in November, but it may have been widely publicized reports of faculty misconduct related to Israel-Gaza. No one outside the Regents knows for sure. What does seem clear is that by the time of this meeting, Pérez likely knew that the Board would not go ahead with the hiring of undocumented students.

After the agenda adjustment, there were statements from undergraduate and graduate students. The former pushed for more resources to deal with student substance abuse issues. She also complained that most chancellors weren't meeting with student groups and suggested that there would be less angry rhetoric by students at Regents meetings if chancellors met with them. The latter expressed support for anti-Israel divestment, opposed the website item, but spent most of his time on a report and issues related to disabled students.

After the discussion deferring the website issue, there was a lengthy presentation on UC-Merced.

The afternoon session began with President Drake indicating that after their legal review, the committee that had been formed to deal with the undocumented issue had concluded that the risks were too great to go ahead and he proposed that the matter be deferred for one year. It was not clear what would happen over the course of a year to change the risks he enumerated which included legal risks to undocumented students who had been hired, to human resource staff members who facilitated the hiring, and to legal staff who went along with the hiring. In addition, university federal grants would be at risk. (As blog

readers will know, it appears that the Biden administration had signaled to UC that it would have to litigate against UC if the plan went ahead. The political optic before the election would not be good, but a year from now the election would have occurred.)

Pérez was clearly angered by Drake's position. He complained that UC has never been a leader regarding undocumented students and that policies it has have always been reactive. Regent Hernandez was also against the one year delay. School Superintendent Thurmond was the only elected *ex officio* Regent present (via remote connection) and was also opposed. One of the alumni regents proposed just killing the issue since the one year delay was just holding out a false hope and nothing would change in a year. But it was ruled that such a change would have to be voted on separately, although it never was.

In the end, the proposal to defer the matter for a year passed. At that point, there was shouting from the audience which appeared to come from one audience member rather than a multi-person demonstration. It was decided to take a 5-minute break, presumably to remove the shouter. But the Regents never came back. For a time, the university seal was on the screen with the statement that the meeting would resume. But then there was a brief image of the conference room with most of the Regents gone. The seal came back saying the meeting had adjourned.

In the end, therefore, there will be no further discussion of hiring undocumented students for a year, if then. Item B1 is in limbo but presumably would be rescheduled for March if Pérez want it considered. And the website issue is definitely on the March agenda unless something else happens between now and then.

The Regents seems to be in a state of dysfunction in the moment along with some ongoing tensions with the Academic Senate.

As always, we preserve Regents recordings since the Regents have no policy on duration of retention. Our policy is indefinite retention.

The morning session is at:

<https://ia601306.us.archive.org/11/items/board-1-25-2024-am/Board%201-25-2024%20AM.mp4>

The afternoon session is at:

<https://ia601306.us.archive.org/11/items/board-1-25-2024-am/Board%201-25-2024%20PM.mp4>

And the general link for the entire day is:

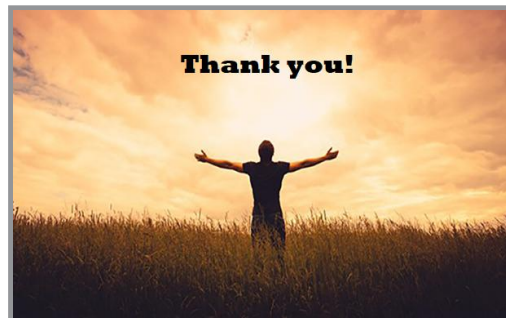
<https://archive.org/details/board-1-25-2024-am>.

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We have now covered the Tuesday and Thursday sessions and part of the Wednesday session. We will complete our coverage of the rest of the meetings in due course.

Grateful - Part 2

Saturday, January 27, 2024



As we predicted earlier,* UC president Drake expressed gratitude for the governor's assurance that the "deferred" piece of the budget UC was supposed to get in 2024-25 would be paid the following year, assuming the legislature enacts his January budget plan. (We pointed out that what the legislature enacts the year after next is up to the legislature then; there is no guarantee.)

Beyond that issue is the fact that the January plan, according to the Legislative Analyst's Office, leaves uncertain where a missing \$8 billion that must be paid to K-14 under Prop 98 will come from. From EdSource:

... School districts have already spent funding from 2022–23, including on staff pay raises that they negotiated with good faith estimates. Newsom and the Legislature could try to deduct that overpayment from the current and 2024-25 budgets, but such a move “would be devastating for students and staff,” Patti Herrera, vice president of the school consulting firm California School Services, told a workshop last week with more than 1,000 school district administrators in Sacramento.

As an alternative, Newsom proposes to find reductions from the non-Proposition 98 side of the general fund, which covers higher education, child care and all other non-education expenses, from prisons to climate change programs.

“We are super grateful there will be no attempts to claw back” the money given to school districts in a past year’s budget, Herrera said...

Full story at <https://edsources.org/2024/newsoms-8-billion-fix-to-spare-cuts-to-schools-community-colleges-may-face-tough-sell/704432>.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/01/grateful.html>.

New University Librarian

Sunday, January 28, 2024



From the Bruin: *Former UCLA director of library special collections Athena Jackson will be the next Norman and Armena Powell University Librarian, UCLA announced Thursday. Jackson will start in the role March 1, succeeding Virginia Steel – who had occupied the position since 2013, according to an announcement from Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Darnell Hunt. Jackson previously served as director of library special collections at UCLA beginning in 2019 before becoming the dean of libraries and Elizabeth D. Rockwell Chair at the University of Houston in 2021.*

Jackson was also previously the Dorothy Foehr Huck Chair and head of the Eberly Family Special Collections Library at Penn State University, a special collections librarian at the University of Miami, the coordinator of the North Carolina Newspaper Digitization Project and an archivist at the North Carolina State Archives. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Houston and received a Master of Science in library and information science from the University of North Texas. Jackson is also involved in scholarship dialogues through member organizations of the University of Houston such as the Association of Research Libraries, the Council on Library and Information Resources and the Texas Digital Library...

Full story at <https://dailybruin.com/2024/01/25/ucla-appoints-athena-jackson-as-norman-and-armena-powell-university-librarian>.

Watch the Regents Morning Meetings of January 24th

Monday, January 29, 2024



We have been summarizing the meetings last week of the UC Regents in somewhat piecemeal fashion because certain issues stood out separately from others. Here we summarize other matters that came up during the morning meeting of January 24th (some of which drifted into the afternoon).

Public comments were largely anti-Israel speakers along with some pushing for the "Opportunity for All" proposal allowing UC hiring of undocumented students. As blog readers will know, the latter proposal was later shelved by the Regents for one year, probably killing it. Other topics included the UC-San Francisco takeover of St. Mary's and St. Francis hospitals, Teamster negotiations, aid to Black students, general student aid, reinstatement of a public service program at UC-Berkeley law school. A demonstration occurred after public comments which led to the room being cleared.

After the session resumed, Regent Chair Leib spoke about enrollment data and endorsed the proposal on the agenda to ban departmental political statements. As blog readers will know, that proposal was deferred to March amid controversy that was partially tied to the undocumented issue. President Drake referred to the deferral of the incremental contribution to the UC budget due from the state under the "compact" and said he was assured the deferred amount would be paid in the year after it was due. (As blog readers will know, there can be no guarantee that such an assurance will come to pass.) Faculty representative Steintrager went over current Senate guidelines concerning department statements, hinting at his later position that the matter should be further reviewed by the Senate. He also alluded an item that was on the agenda later: online education.

The Health Services Committee had only a short public session approving an executive pay matter.

At Finance and Capital Strategies, there was a review of the cost and planning for seismic upgrading. In some cases, buildings can be upgraded but others have to be replaced to meet standards. Current policy requires all buildings to meet standards by 2030, but lack of sufficient funding will likely delay full compliance.

The discussion on the state budget referred to the above-mentioned compact deferral along with other smaller cutbacks. UC is continuing with enrollment increases under the compact even though the state commitment has been "deferred." Regent Pérez noted that UC had better work on alternative planning in case we don't get the deferral or even

any increment at all in the second year.

At Academic and Student Affairs, tuition (fee) increases were increased for nine professional graduate programs. The discussion then turned to a report on students with disabilities which can be found at:

<https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/jan24/a2.pdf>

and

<https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/jan24/a2attach1.pdf>.

Generally, the Regents praised the report. The committee also heard a report on online education at UC. Over 40% of students took at least one online course during 2022-23, i.e., after the period in which the pandemic forced courses online. A strategic plan for the future was said to be under development.

Finally, the National Labs committee heard that the three UC labs received very high performance ratings from the Dept. of Energy. The methodology behind those ratings was not explained.

As always, we preserve Regents meetings indefinitely since the Regents have no policy on duration of retention.

The morning board meeting is at:

<https://ia601304.us.archive.org/5/items/board-1-24-2024-am/Board%201-24-2024%20am.mp4>

Health Services is at:

<https://ia801304.us.archive.org/5/items/board-1-24-2024-am/Health%20Services%20Committee%201-24-2024%20am.mp4>

Academic and Student Affairs is at:

<https://ia801304.us.archive.org/5/items/board-1-24-2024-am/Academic%20and%20Student%20Affairs%20Committee%201-24-2024%20am.mp4>.

Finance and Capital Strategies and National Labs are at:

<https://ia801304.us.archive.org/5/items/board-1-24-2024-am/Health%20Services%20Committee%201-24-2024%20am.mp4>

The general web link for the morning session is:

<https://archive.org/details/board-1-24-2024-am>.

Watch the Afternoon Meeting of the Regents: Jan. 24

Tuesday, January 30, 2024



Continuing our catching up with the portions of the Regents meetings of last week, we now move to the afternoon of January 24th. We have already covered the discussion of departmental political statements which was the hot topic of that day.

Beyond that topic, the Governance Committee approved appoints and pay for new head librarians at Berkeley and UCLA.

At Public Engagement and Development, there was discussion of a homeless initiative at UC-San Francisco. A survey found that 90% of homeless were from California and 75% were in their county of origin. Affordable housing provision was emphasized.

There was a government relations report which noted the deferral of the increment due to UC in the governor's budget to the following year, but with the usual gratitude expressed despite the violation of the compact. Issues expected in the legislature include athletics, AI, housing, and labor standards at UC.

Finally, there was a presentation on the UC Advocacy Network (UCAN) and its lobbying for UC interests.

As always, we preserve recordings of Regents meeting indefinitely since the Regents have no policy concerning duration of retention.

You can see the Governance Committee at:

<https://ia801300.us.archive.org/29/items/governance-committee-1-24-2024-pm/Governance%20Committee%201-24-2024%20pm.mp4>

Public Engagement and Development at:

<https://ia601300.us.archive.org/29/items/governance-committee-1-24-2024-pm/Public%20Engagement%20and%20Development%201-24-2024%20pm.mp4>

And the full web address for the afternoon session at:

<https://archive.org/details/governance-committee-1-24-2024-pm>. The previously-

discussed department statement issue is also at this site.

In case you were wondering...

Wednesday, January 31, 2024



A Regents item last week indicated that a purchase by UCLA of (yet) a(nother) hospital was to be reviewed in closed session. The hospital in question was not named. It turned out to be the West Hills Hospital in the San Fernando Valley.

From the Bruin: *UCLA Health has received approval to acquire the 260-bed West Hills Hospital and Medical Center. The proposed expansion was approved by the UC Board of Regents and will help UCLA Health mitigate issues with capacity constraints, said a UCLA Health spokesperson in an emailed statement. "This effort will help UCLA Health to immediately address the significant inpatient, emergency department and operating room capacity constraints in our health system," the spokesperson said in the statement. "It also helps us to fulfill our commitment to enhance access to care across the region."*

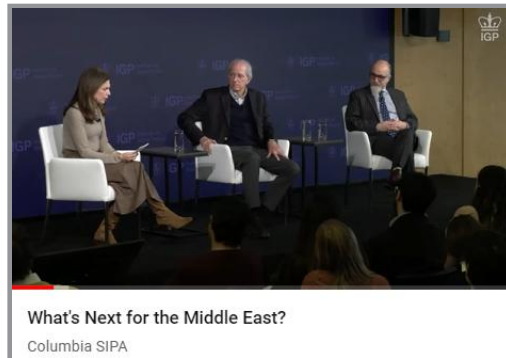
The West Hills Hospital and Medical Center, located in the west San Fernando Valley, includes a staff of around 900 employees and 450 medical staff and has serviced the community for over 50 years, according to its website. It ranked on Healthgrades' list of America's 250 Best Hospitals in 2024...

Full story at <https://dailybruin.com/2024/01/26/ucla-health-to-acquire-west-hills-hospital-and-medical-center>.

One suspects that just as health insurance companies have become more concentrated - which gives them more bargaining leverage in negotiating fees - there is an incentive for providers to do the same for the same purpose.

Columbia Goes the Dartmouth Route: UCLA Needs to Follow

Wednesday, January 31, 2024



As blog readers will know, when tensions arose on various campuses due to the current Israel-Gaza War, Dartmouth was an early pioneer in creating educational dialogues as an alternative to the kinds of disruptions that occurred elsewhere.

We also noted an example of that approach at the UCLA med school.*

Columbia University has now followed the dialogue example. From the [Daily Spectator](#):

The School of International and Public Affairs's Institute for Global Politics hosted "What's Next for the Middle East?" on Friday [Jan. 26], a conversation on the future of diplomacy and peace negotiations in the Israel-Hamas war.

*The event was part of the **Dialogue Across Difference** series, an initiative announced on Dec. 20 as part of University President Minouche Shafik's efforts to cultivate a "culture of civility and empathy" on campus amid the Israel-Hamas war. **Hillary Rodham Clinton**, former Secretary of State and professor of international and public affairs, delivered the event's opening remarks.*

"As a new Universitywide initiative, this series provides our community with a vital forum to come together, hold difficult yet meaningful conversations, and model civil discourse for our students and ourselves," Clinton said.

***Ghaith al-Omari**, former executive director of the American Task Force on Palestine and senior fellow at the Washington Institute, and **Dennis Ross**, former U.S. director of policy planning and distinguished fellow at the Washington Institute, discussed possible avenues toward peace in the Middle East.*

*The event, which took place on the 15th floor of the International Affairs Building, was moderated by **Laura Secor**, an international editor at the Atlantic.*

Both al-Omari and Ross have direct experience in peace talks between Israeli and Palestinian negotiating parties. Al-Omari was a member of the Palestinian negotiating team during the 1999-2001 peace negotiations, including the 2000 Camp David Summit. During both the George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton administrations, Ross helped broker

peace talks between Israeli and Palestinian negotiating parties, and was appointed Clinton's Middle East envoy in 1993.

...Following a 40-minute long discussion between the former diplomats and Secor, the conversation opened to the audience for a Q&A...

Full story at <https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2024/01/28/sipas-institute-for-global-politics-hosts-conversation-on-diplomacy-amid-israel-hamas-war/>.

You can see the dialogue at:

Or direct to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XmNShwoWIA8>. Alternative:

https://ia801406.us.archive.org/35/items/a-laugh-a-tear-a-mitzvah/What%27s%20Next%20for%20the%20Middle%20East_.mp4.

UCLA needs to get its own version of such dialogues on the road, and not just confined to the med school.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2023/12/uclas-med-school-has-dartmouth.html>.

Lack of Logrolling

Thursday, February 01, 2024



As blog readers will know, the final meeting of the Regents effectively collapsed over two seemingly-unrelated issues: departmental political statements and UC jobs for undocumented students.

The UC Board of Regents is a mini-legislature for the university, but some members come from a political background - such as Regent Pérez - and others don't. Those with political backgrounds are used to the idea of "logrolling" in which votes are informally traded. I'll support yours if you support mine. But there is also a kind of anti-logrolling: if you won't support mine, I won't support yours.

There were Regents such as Pérez who very much wanted some kind of positive decision on the undocumented issue despite the legal risks that were reportedly entailed. I say "reportedly" because the special committee that was formed to deal with the issue met behind closed doors. We can only surmise that the general counsel strongly emphasized the risks. As blog readers will know, there are also reports that the Biden administration let it be known that it did not want to be entangled in immigration-related issues by UC before the upcoming election.

What we don't know is whether - with some creative thought - it might have been possible to create a test case that could have limited the risk to UC. Apparently, the theory that UC could legally hire undocumented students rested on its being a state entity. Perhaps, with the assistance of the legislature, some kind of separate non-UC entity might have been created that would provide the employment. A few volunteers could then have been apprised of the risks to them and a test case might have been litigated. There might have been other creative options that could have allowed a test case that wouldn't put the larger UC at risk. Just postponing the issue for a year - which seems to be a fig leaf for killing it - did not allow for a testing of the legal theory.

The departmental statement issue was presented in a poorly-drafted form in which the much of the ambiguity revolved around the question of what was a "landing" webpage. The landing page issue obscured two problems. One is that the Academic Senate had guidelines, but not mandates, about how such statements were to be presented. The guidelines were ignored without consequences which got the Regents involved. One solution would have been to mandate the rules rather than just suggest them. There are other issues with the current guidelines, but the point is the Regents got diverted by the landing page matter. The larger issue is whether departments - which presumably means

all department faculty, ladder and nonladder, tenured and nontenured, all students, and all staff - share a single view or must share a single view to be in the department, and - if they don't - would be willing to write up a dissenting view (perhaps angering those who disagree), also to be placed on the website.

A logrolling compromise might have been reached in which there would be some kind of workaround, test case scenario on the undocumented issue implemented by some date certain and some kind of fixed-up Senate rule mandate developed by some date certain, both for a final vote. Such a deal did not occur, of course, leading to the abrupt ending of last Thursday's meeting and a dysfunctional board. Maybe some Regents need to take Poli Sci 101.

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Note: Here is the official tally on the vote to "suspend" action on the undocumented issue for one year:

Approved

BOARD OF REGENTS

January 25, 2024

AMENDMENT OF REGENTS POLICY 4407: EQUITABLE STUDENT EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

A motion was made to suspend implementation of Regents Policy 4407 for one year.

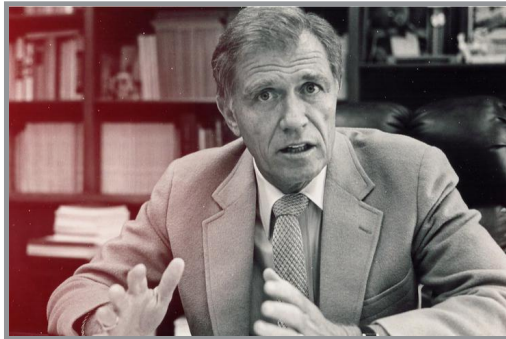
Board vote: Regents Anguiano, Chu, Cohen, Drake, Leib, Matosantos, Park, Raznick, Reilly, and Robinson voting "aye,"

Regents Ellis, Hernandez, Pérez, Sarris, Tesfai, and Thurmond voting "no," and Regent Makarechian abstaining.

Source: <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/aar/janb.pdf>.

Follow Up on Chancellor Young Memorial

Thursday, February 01, 2024



We provided a series of photographs in a past post on the January 18th memorial ceremony for former Chancellor Charles Young.* Also on the agenda of that ceremony was a video which is now available at:

<https://vimeo.com/903849307>.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/01/amateur-photos-from-memorial-for.html>.

More Money - Or Not - Depends How You Frame It

Friday, February 02, 2024



As a result of contract interpretation, some student workers will get more money from the 2022 agreement. The union and UC frame the issue in a different way. From the Bruin:

Academic workers reached an agreement with the UC on Monday to increase wages and employment rates for graduate student researchers. Affected researchers will receive raises as high as \$10,000 per year, according to a United Auto Workers Local 2865 press release from Monday afternoon.

Since UAW and the UC came to an agreement on their historic contract in December 2022, graduate student researchers – previously under Student Researchers United-UAW before its merger with UAW Local 2865 in February – argued that UC management ignored its contract and manipulated full-time equivalent percentages of student researcher appointments to short them on pay.

Rafael Jaime, president of UAW Local 2865 and a UCLA English doctoral student, said in the press release that as workers head into collective bargaining next January, the agreement represents the power of collective action. “Academic workers spent all year fighting UC for their right to a fair appointment. Now, in spite of intense retaliation and union-busting, we’ve won it,” Jaime said in the press release. “This agreement is more evidence of the power academic workers have when we come together.”

In an emailed statement Tuesday, a UC spokesperson said the University disputes UAW’s characterization of graduate student researcher appointment percentages. “Since the parties ratified the new Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) collective bargaining agreement in late 2022, we have been working through difficult implementation issues, including how to delineate between a graduate student’s efforts on their academic progress versus the research work they are doing as an employee for the institution,” they said in the emailed statement.

According to UAW’s press release, Monday’s agreement will bring nearly 4,000 graduate student researchers up to the 50% appointments the union expected following its 2022 strike. However, a UC spokesperson said that to resolve disputes on graduate student

researcher appointments, the University only agreed to bring some of its appointments up to the 50% mark for this spring term...

Full story at <https://dailybruin.com/2024/01/29/uc-graduate-student-researchers-secure-increases-in-employment-rates-wages>.

Faculty Club Concerns

Friday, February 02, 2024



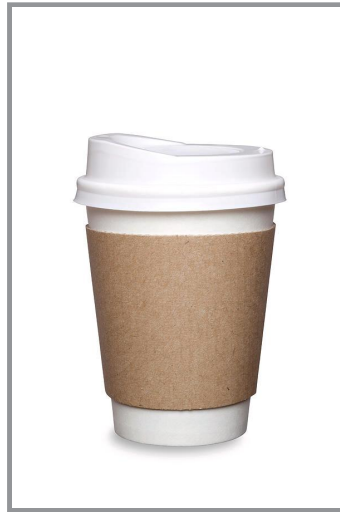
There was a general meeting of the Faculty Club yesterday, in-person and on Zoom. Yours truly tuned in, but a few minutes late. There is interim leadership through August 31 at present at which point a presumably newly-elected board and president will take office. Exactly what led to the turmoil in leadership was unclear. However, the Club was reported to have a large, but diminishing operating deficit. There was a loss of membership due to the pandemic and the period when the Club was closed for renovation. The Luskin "Grand Hotel" has taken business that would otherwise have gone to the Club. (Surprise, surprise, and more evidence that the Grand Hotel was a low priority for the campus which already had sufficient meeting space.)

During the Q&A session that followed the formal presentation, it was noted that the Club didn't apply for the forgivable pandemic "loans" from the federal government that might have provided a revenue source. It was not explained why. Was the Club not eligible?

Anyway, with the help of new leadership and the new general manager, hopefully the Club will see its way to a sustainable budget situation.

The Starbucks Issue

Saturday, February 03, 2024



Last October, when the issue of a labor-related boycott on Starbucks came up at UCLA, we did a quick search and found one location in the med center area.* The issue has arisen again and a more diligent search also finds a location at Anderson.**

From the LA Daily News: *Students at UCLA and UC Riverside are demanding their schools cut ties with Starbucks until the coffee chain ends an alleged union-busting campaign against its baristas. In a show of solidarity, the students plan to deliver petitions with more than 1,500 signatures to the two universities this week. “The issues of Starbucks workers and the experiences that students face are intersectional, and we must be in solidarity,” said David Ramirez, a UCLA student, former Starbucks worker and member of UCLA Students Against Starbucks.*

Starbucks spokesman Andrew Trull addressed union concerns in a statement released Monday, Jan. 29. “As a company, we respect our partners’ right to organize, freely associate, engage in lawful union activities and bargain collectively without fear of reprisal or retaliation — and remain committed to our stated aim of reaching ratified contracts for union-represented stores in 2024,” he said.

The move to organize has grown rapidly in recent years with workers at more than 385 Starbucks stores unionizing with Starbucks Workers United as they lobby for higher wages, increased staffing and consistent scheduling, despite heavy pushback from the coffee chain...

The UCLA petition... to the board of directors for Associated Students UCLA, demands that the school divest from Starbucks and terminate its licensing agreement with the company.

The UC Riverside petition... to Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox and top decision-makers at the university, will likewise demand that the university not renew its contract with the coffee chain...

Full story at <https://www.dailynews.com/2024/01/29/ucla-uc-riverside-students-petition-to-remove-starbucks-from-campuses/>.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2023/10/will-starbucks-labor-controversy-come.html>.

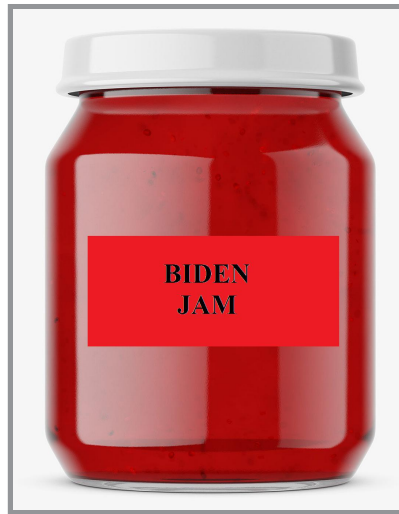
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<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/61b244bd3419a10c6b5ea8d7/t/6515df2d4308781a8adcc0f8/1695932209911/2023-Anderson+Cafe+Menu.pdf>.

Biden Jam Later Today

Saturday, February 03, 2024



President Biden will be on the Westside late today - exactly where is unclear. There could be effects on traffic to and from UCLA, even on a Saturday. From the [Santa Monica Daily Press](#):

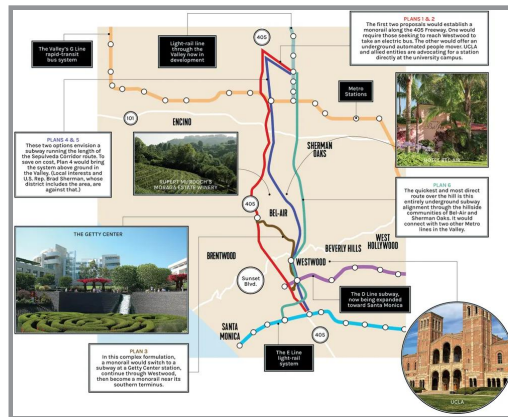
President Joe Biden will pass through the Santa Monica Airport on Saturday as part of a Los Angeles campaign blitz. The President and First Lady are expected to arrive at LAX at about 4:05 p.m. via Air Force 1 and then take the presidential helicopter to SMO [Santa Monica Airport] at about 4:15 p.m.

Presidents have used the Santa Monica Airport to leapfrog over airport traffic for decades and Biden last came to town in early December. Biden is coming to town to secure support from Black entertainment industry leaders for his reelection campaign. He's then expected to travel to Las Vegas and return to Washington D.C. on Sunday afternoon...

Full story at <https://smdp.com/2024/02/03/biden-lands-in-santa-monica-this-afternoon/>.

Subway from the Valley?

Sunday, February 04, 2024



There are various proposals for some kind of transit system that would take riders from the San Fernando Valley to Westwood and UCLA. One involves a monorail through the Sepulveda Pass, parallel to the 405 Freeway. That option would then link to some kind of people mover (or maybe a bus) to UCLA. The other option involves a subway tunnel under Bel Air. The Hollywood Reporter has a piece indicating strong opposition from Bel Air residents to such a tunnel, although there would be no Bel Air station. You can read all about it at:

<https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/business/business-news/fred-rozen-battle-bel-air-subway-1235807662/>.

Biden Jam Follow-Up

Sunday, February 04, 2024



We noted yesterday that President Biden would be in town on the Westside, and thus possibly in the UCLA area.

Apparently, he did come to Westwood last night for an event at the W Hotel.

There were anti-Biden/anti-Israel demonstrators in the area, but they were kept at some distance according to an account in the Daily Bruin:

<https://dailybruin.com/2024/02/03/ucla-community-members-protest-president-joe-bidens-westwood-visit>.

It appears Biden didn't stay at the hotel overnight. The Bruin has some video taken across the street from the bus stop below the Faculty Club which shows the motorcade leaving. Unclear if Biden will still be in the Westside area today.

Video:

Or direct to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dqPhKsvScbs>.

The Regents' Health Services Committee Will Be Back at UCLA on Vale...

Monday, February 05, 2024



The agenda for the February off-cycle meeting of the Regents' Health Services Committee is now available:

Health Services Committee

Wednesday, February 14, 2024

Centennial Ballroom, UCLA Luskin Conference Center

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10:00 am **Health Services Committee** - (open session- includes public comment)

Agenda – Open Session

Action Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of December 13, 2023

Public Comment Period (30 minutes)

H1 Discussion: Reviewing Draft the UC Health Strategic Framework, Office of the President

H2 Discussion: Improving Access to Care Across Student Health Services

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Upon end of open session:

Health Services Committee - (closed session)

Agenda – Closed Session

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of December 13, 2023

H3(X) Discussion: Medical Center Response to Adverse Events: Review, Regulatory Requirements, Corrective Actions, and Sharing Systemwide and Insurance/Claims Update

H4(X) Discussion: UC Health Litigation Update

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2:00 pm Board - (open session)

Agenda – Open Session

B1 Action: Consideration of Senate Regulation 630.E*

Committee Report Including Approvals of Recommendations from the Committee:
Academic and Student Affairs Committee

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Upon end of open session:

Board - (closed session)

Officers' and President's Reports: Personnel Matters

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Source: <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/meetings/agendas/feb142024.html>.

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*This item seems to deal with undergraduate online education limitations. It is a holdover from the January Regents meetings which fell apart for reasons unrelated to this matter, as blog readers will know. Regulation 630.E reads:

Each undergraduate student must complete a campus experience requirement. A minimum of six units of course credits per quarter (or semester) for three quarters (or two semesters) completed by each candidate for the bachelor's degree must be earned in courses designed to deliver to any enrolled student at least 50 percent of in-person instructional hours on any campus of the University of California or physical locations affiliated with programs listed in SR 630.D or in prison environments. To satisfy this requirement, at least two quarters or one semester must be completed during the regular academic year, with no more than one quarter or semester completed during the summer. "In-person" means instructors and students are in the same physical location. "Instructional hours" refer to time when instructors are presenting to or interacting with students during designated class times (e.g., lecture, laboratory, discussion, field work, problem sessions). For the purposes of this regulation, instructional hours do not include office hours, or recorded lectures provided as a supplement to designated hours interacting with students. Individual Divisions may maintain a higher threshold for required in-person course credits per term or for the number of terms in which a threshold applies. (En 8 Feb 23)

Source: <https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/bylaws-regulations/regulations/rpart3.html>.

It is unclear how this undergraduate regulation applies to the usual purview of the Health Services Committee. So, apparently, this session is an off-cycle full board meeting that goes beyond Health Services.

I dissent (again)

Monday, February 05, 2024



Those who read this blog on a PC may have seen this letter in the right-hand corner of their screen:

<https://cuca.org/2024/01/our-letter-ucsf-should-not-attack-their-own-faculty/>

I totally dissent from this letter which refers to two "tweets" from state senator Scott Wiener (Dem - San Francisco), an influential member of the state senate:

https://twitter.com/scott_wiener/status/1742966467484868909

https://twitter.com/Scott_Wiener/status/1742966472903987451

The first tweet reproduces a tweet by a UC-SF faculty member/physician that implies that "Zionist" doctors "in US medicine" - presumably including those at UC-SF - are mistreating patients. It is appalling to suggest that such an "opinion," expressed in a public forum, should have no consequences.

Big Ten Advisory Committee

Monday, February 05, 2024



No one is quite sure what the announcement from the Big Ten below means in practice. But with UCLA soon to enter the Big Ten, presumably the new UCLA chancellor will be part of the advisory committee that is being established:

The Big Ten Conference and Southeastern Conference today announced the formation of a joint advisory group of university presidents, chancellors, and athletics directors to address the significant challenges facing college athletics and the opportunities for betterment of the student-athlete experience.

These challenges, including but not limited to recent court decisions, pending litigation, a patchwork of state laws, and complex governance proposals, compel the two conferences to take a leadership role in developing solutions for a sustainable future of college sports.

The advisory group will engage with other constituencies as necessary, including consultation with student-athletes and other key leadership groups from within both conferences.

“The Big Ten and the SEC have substantial investment in the NCAA and there is no question that the voices of our two conferences are integral to governance and other reform efforts,” said Big Ten Commissioner Tony Petitti. “We recognize the similarity in our circumstances, as well as the urgency to address the common challenges we face.”

“There are similar cultural and social impacts on our student-athletes, our institutions, and our communities because of the new collegiate athletics environment,” said SEC Commissioner Greg Sankey. “We do not have predetermined answers to the myriad questions facing us. We do not expect to agree on everything but enhancing interaction between our conferences will help to focus efforts on common sense solutions.”

The advisory group will have no authority to act independently and will only serve as a consulting body. Its composition, charter and timetable, as well as the specific questions it might examine, have yet to be determined.

Source: <https://bigten.org/news/2024/2/2/general-big-ten-conference-southeastern-conference-form-advisory-group.aspx>.

Rain Problem in UCLA Area

Monday, February 05, 2024



From [Santa Monica Patch](#):

Portions of the San Diego (405) Freeway are closed in the Sepulveda Pass and Long Beach areas due to mudslides. Commuters are advised to expect delays and watch out for Caltrans workers. A mudslide near the Getty Center shut down the far right lane of the southbound side of the freeway. The lane is closed between Getty Center Drive and Sunset Boulevard, bringing traffic to a crawl...

Full story at <https://patch.com/california/santamonica/s/iun0q/mudslides-shut-down-portions-of-405-freeway>.

Checking in on the ever-contentious TMT

Tuesday, February 06, 2024



From time to time, we look into the Hawaiian Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) project in which UC is involved to see what is happening, if anything. As blog readers will know, the TMT has been the subject of protests - along with some support - at the public comments segments of Regents meetings. From [Hawaii News Now](#):

There's another struggle over the management of Mauna Kea. A special oversight authority set up to manage Mauna Kea after the Thirty Meter Telescope protests could get a rewrite by lawmakers, but it's opposed by the authority itself. Members of the state Senate Committee on Water and Land on Thursday debated Senate Bill 2297, which aims to clarify the management of Mauna Kea between Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority and the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

Act 255 was passed by Legislature and then signed into law by then-Gov. David Ige in 2022. It created a Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority. "This bill actually clarifies that if a decision were to come to a head between the Mauna Kea Authority and the Board of Land and Natural Resources, the board, if this bill passes would be the final authority," said State Sen. Lorraine Inouye, chair of the Land and Water Committee.

Inouye introduced the bill and says she wants to make sure conservation lands are protected and the state has jurisdiction over conservation, enforcement and finances. "I'm concerned that this administratively attached agency in name only is exempt from any oversight," said Inouye.

But her measure is opposed by the 11-member Mauna Kea Authority. "We would be taking away that vote from people that didn't have a voice and make them basically an advisory board," said John Komeiji, Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority chair. The authority was formed after the TMT protests and years of alleged mismanagement.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs supports SB 2297. It has sued the state over mismanagement at the mountain and last month filed a lawsuit trying to dissolve the

Mauna Kea Authority. "That authority, unfortunately, is unconstitutional," said Kurt Klein, OHA board counsel.

But State Sen. Kurt Fevella, who opposes the TMT project, had sharp words for OHA. "You guys always worry about not getting your fair share from the university, and the state, but not really caring about how the mauna is being treated," said Fevella. "Now because the authority is ready to go, everybody wants to take it apart," he added.

Inouye deferred decision-making on the bill until [Feb. 5] to get more input from OHA.

Source: <https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/2024/02/02/renewed-power-struggle-over-management-mauna-kea/>.

I know. It's hard to figure out from this account who is doing what to whom. I think the take-away is that there remains a political muddle in Hawaii over the TMT issue.

Strike News

Tuesday, February 06, 2024



UC optometrists, members of UPTE-CWA, are holding an "unfair labor practice strike" today (February 6th) and tomorrow (February 7th) on various campuses over stalled bargaining.

There will be picketing at UCLA's Ronald Reagan Hospital 8 AM to 2 PM on both days.

Source: Email received by yours truly.

Fox for Sale - Part 2

Wednesday, February 07, 2024



Last summer, we noted that Westwood's Fox Theater - a local landmark - was for sale.* Now it appears there is a buyer. From the Hollywood Reporter:

One of Westwood's historic movie theaters will soon have new ownership. Filmmaker Jason Reitman is leading an unnamed group of investors in purchasing the art deco Fox Village Theater, located at 945 Broxton Ave. The news, first reported by The Ankler's Peter Kiefer, was confirmed by The Hollywood Reporter. Per the initial report, Reitman and crew are "weeks away" from taking over the property in a deal that is currently in escrow...

Westwood was once home to a lively theatrical scene, thanks to the Fox Village, the adjacent Regency Bruin and the Landmark Westwood just a stone's throw from the other two. In recent years, however, amid the rise in streaming and the blows caused by the pandemic, the Westwood theaters are largely known in Hollywood circles as go-to rental hubs for red carpet premieres...

It's unclear what Reitman and his investors will do with the property, which reportedly is in need of an upgrade. Reitman has the movie business in his DNA. The son of late influential filmmaker and producer Ivan Reitman, Jason Reitman has been making movies since the late '90s...

Full story at <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/movies/movie-news/jason-reitman-westwood-fox-village-theater-ownership-purchase-1235813970/>.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2023/07/fox-for-sale.html>.

Players as Employees

Wednesday, February 07, 2024



The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has determined that basketball players at Dartmouth are employees and thus can have union protections. From Politico:

The National Labor Relations Board on Monday green-lighted a union election for members of the Dartmouth College men's basketball team, a decision with potentially seismic implications for the future of collegiate athletics.

Players on the team last year petitioned the NLRB to organize with a local arm of the powerhouse labor union SEIU that represents other groups at Dartmouth. Dartmouth, like other universities, has seen a recent rise of union activism on campus, which leaders of the effort to form a union for the basketball team have publicly cited as an inspiration.

The NLRB's regional director in Boston, Laura Sacks, determined that the players are workers under the National Labor Relations Act and thus are eligible to unionize — in part because coaches and other school officials “control the work performed by the Dartmouth men's basketball team, and the players perform that work in exchange for compensation.”

Dartmouth argues that the financial assistance it offers athletes is need-based and disputes that it is compensation. Dartmouth, like all schools in the Ivy League, does not offer athletic scholarships...

Full story at <https://www.politico.com/news/2024/02/05/nlr-union-election-dartmouth-00139737>.

Note that UC schools, because they are public, do not fall under NLRB jurisdiction but rather are subject to the California Public Employment Relations Board (PERB). However, the statutory language covering UC is similar to the federal legislation giving the NLRB jurisdiction over the private sector. So, PERB's decision may be influenced by what the NLRB does, particularly in union-friendly California.

There will undoubtedly be legal challenges to the Dartmouth decision.

Strike News - Part 2

Wednesday, February 07, 2024



Yesterday, we noted that UCLA optometrists, and optometrists at other UC campuses, were holding a two-day strike - Tuesday and Wednesday.

The Bruin has more information:

In a press release, UPTE-CWA said it decided to strike after the union filed an unfair labor charge against the UC on Jan. 10, alleging that the University failed to provide information needed for negotiations to the union in a timely manner, bargained in bad faith and refused to negotiate over placement of individual optometrists.

...A spokesperson for the UC Office of the President said in an emailed statement that the University is committed to good-faith bargaining with UPTE-CWA. However, they added in the statement that they believe the union's actions are unlawful under its collective bargaining agreement no-strike clause, which prevents work stoppages and requires the union to prevent actions that would impede its contract.

The UC filed an unfair labor charge of its own with the California Public Employment Relations Board on Friday, alleging unlawful behavior...

Full story at <https://dailybruin.com/2024/02/06/we-put-the-see-in-the-uc-optometrists-picket-against-unfair-labor-practices>.

For those unfamiliar with the nuances of labor law, a union can strike to protest an unfair labor practice being committed by an employer, even in the face of a no-strike clause in its contract. In this case, the union is saying that UC is withholding information necessary for good faith bargaining - which is required under labor law. UC disputes this allegation. PERB is the final judge on whether there was such withholding of information, i.e., whether the strike is indeed an unfair labor practice strike. As a practical matter, by the time PERB gets around to deciding whether the work stoppage was an unfair labor practice strike or an economic strike, the strike will long be over. That fact doesn't mean there is no cost to strikers who presumably potentially lose two day's pay. And of course, there is pressure on UC Health to come to an agreement due to the cost of the

interruption.

As blog readers will know, the UC Regents' Health Services Committee will be meeting at UCLA on Feb. 14, so there may be public comment statements and protests at that time by the union.

Blackstone REIT Still Draining - Part 13

Thursday, February 08, 2024



From time to time, we look in at our pension and endowment investment in the Blackstone Real Estate Investment Trust (BREIT) which is still experiencing a slow-motion run. As blog readers will know, UC put in \$4.5 billion of pension and endowment money as a kind of bailout in exchange for a "guaranteed" high return of 11.25% back in late 2022.

As of January 2024, BREIT was still draining and rationing payouts to investors who wanted to get their money out:

The nation's largest nontraded REIT has fulfilled 88% of requests from investors looking to cash out their shares. Blackstone Real Estate Investment Trust said the repurchase payout is at its highest percentage since proration began and essentially clears all requests, which have fallen nearly 80% since peaking in January 2023. Of the \$1.3B worth of requests received in January, BREIT is fulfilling about \$1.1B, executives wrote in a Feb. 1 letter to shareholders. The move implies the tide may be turning for BREIT, which recorded its worst year for annual returns in 2023...

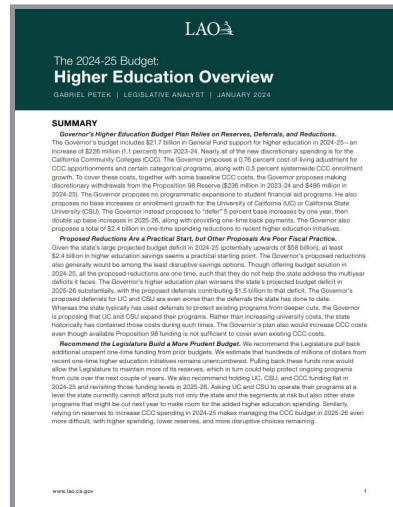
Full story at <https://www.bisnow.com/national/news/commercial-real-estate/breit-fulfills-88-of-13b-january-repurchase-requests-122673>.

Note: See also "Another trough coming in 2024 for boom-and-bust non-traded REITs"

<https://www.investmentnews.com/investing/features/another-trough-coming-in-2024-for-boom-and-bust-non-traded-reits-248545>.

LAO Report on Higher Ed Casts Doubt on Deferrals

Thursday, February 08, 2024



The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) has a report out on the higher ed portion of the governor's January budget proposal for 2024-25 (including community colleges which get revenue under Prop 98). In general, LAO is less optimistic about state revenues than the governor. It is skeptical that the "deferrals" in the budget for UC and CSU will be affordable when the 2025-26 budget is considered by the legislature. Excerpts:

... The Governor's higher education plan worsens the state's projected budget deficit in 2025-26 substantially, with the proposed deferrals contributing \$1.5 billion to that deficit. The Governor's proposed deferrals for UC and CSU are even worse than the deferrals the state has done to date.

Whereas the state typically has used deferrals to protect existing programs from deeper cuts, the Governor is proposing that UC and CSU expand their programs. Rather than increasing university costs, the state historically has contained those costs during such times. The Governor's plan also would increase CCC costs even though available Proposition 98 funding is not sufficient to cover even existing CCC costs... Given the difficulty entailed in cutting other ongoing state programs to make room for more higher education spending, there is no guarantee the state would be able to provide UC and CSU with the \$1.5 billion the Governor proposes in 2025-26. To mitigate these challenges, we recommend the Legislature hold university funding and associated spending expectations flat in 2024-25 rather than relying on revenue that is not currently available to support that spending.

Such an approach would be consistent with the state's traditional approach of containing rather than increasing university costs when facing multiyear budget deficits.

The full report is at <https://lao.ca.gov/reports/2024/4829/Higher-Ed-Budget-Overview-013024.pdf>.

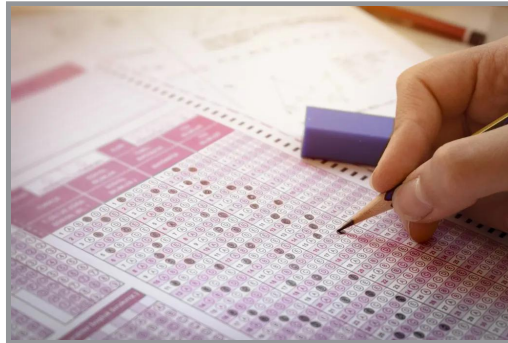
Have you forgotten the ins and outs of the January budget proposal? For your

convenience, we have musically shortened the two-hour budget presentation to a mere seven minutes:

Or direct to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JXSs1frlWqQ>.

The SAT again?

Friday, February 09, 2024



As blog readers will know, the Regents initially commissioned an Academic Senate report on the use of the SAT and other tests for admission. When the report indicated that the SAT contained useful information and, given the way UC used it in conjunction with other considerations, did not harm - in fact promoted - diversity, the Regents nonetheless dropped the test. Other high-profile made the same move in and around the pandemic.

But some have retained the SAT, e.g., MIT. Now Dartmouth is planning to resume its use.

Nowadays, as blog readers will know, Dartmouth seems to be a leader in academic trends. It early on created a dialogue series to ease tensions over the Israel-Gaza War. As we noted earlier this week, it has been told that its basketball players are, in fact, "employees" subject to collective bargaining protections by the NLRB. We'll see if other schools come back to the SAT. Maybe even the Regents will reconsider if the trend persists.

From the [NY Times](#):

Last summer, Sian Beilock — a cognitive scientist who had previously run Barnard College in New York — became the president of Dartmouth. After arriving, she asked a few Dartmouth professors to do an internal study on standardized tests. Like many other colleges during the Covid pandemic, Dartmouth dropped its requirement that applicants submit an SAT or ACT score. With the pandemic over and students again able to take the tests, Dartmouth's admissions team was thinking about reinstating the requirement. Beilock wanted to know what the evidence showed...

Three Dartmouth economists and a sociologist then dug into the numbers. One of their main findings did not surprise them: Test scores were a better predictor than high school grades — or student essays and teacher recommendations — of how well students would fare at Dartmouth. The evidence of this relationship is large and growing...

A second finding was more surprising. During the pandemic, Dartmouth switched to a test-optional policy, in which applicants could choose whether to submit their SAT and ACT scores. And this policy was harming lower-income applicants in a specific way.

The researchers were able to analyze the test scores even of students who had not

submitted them to Dartmouth. (Colleges can see the scores after the admissions process is finished.) Many lower-income students, it turned out, had made a strategic mistake.

They withheld test scores that would have helped them get into Dartmouth. They wrongly believed that their scores were too low, when in truth the admissions office would have judged the scores to be a sign that students had overcome a difficult environment and could thrive at Dartmouth.

As the four professors — Elizabeth Cascio, Bruce Sacerdote, Doug Staiger and Michele Tine — wrote in a memo, referring to the SAT's 1,600-point scale, "There are hundreds of less-advantaged applicants with scores in the 1,400 range who should be submitting scores to identify themselves to admissions, but do not under test-optional policies." Some of these applicants were rejected because the admissions office could not be confident about their academic qualifications. The students would have probably been accepted had they submitted their test scores...

Full story at <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/05/briefing/dartmouth-sat.html>.

These findings from Dartmouth are in line with those of the Academic Senate report ignored by the Regents.

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Note: See also <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/admissions/traditional-age/2024/02/07/dartmouth-admissions-dean-reinstating-test-requirements>.

Blue Cross Deal Reached

Friday, February 09, 2024



From the [San Francisco Chronicle](#): *UC Health reached a contract with insurer Anthem Blue Cross, ending a disagreement that could have forced patients to change doctors or insurers or pay out-of-network fees... Contract negotiations between insurers and health care providers are common as they haggle over reimbursement rates. The contract, which will last four years, applies to all six UC Health academic hospitals which, in addition to UCSF, include UCLA Health, UC Davis Health, UC San Diego Health, UC Irvine Health and UC Riverside Health...*

Full story at <https://www.sfchronicle.com/health/article/uc-health-anthem-blue-cross-reach-avoid-18649225.php>.

Note: The these negotiations did not involve the various health plans for UC employees as we noted back in October. See <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2023/10/dont-panic-part-3.html>.

Kelly to Depart

Friday, February 09, 2024



From the LA Daily News: *The Chip Kelly era has concluded in Westwood. After six seasons at the helm at UCLA, Kelly is expected to become the offensive coordinator at Ohio State, according to multiple reports. The veteran head coach was said to be emotional while talking with players during a meeting Friday as he explained his decision to leave. An interim has not been named. UCLA has started a national search for a new head coach. Athletic director Martin Jarmond has asked the players for a 96-hour window before making any decisions to transfer from the university...*

Full story at <https://www.dailynews.com/2024/02/09/chip-kelly-departs-as-ucla-football-coach/>.

This change, of course, comes as UCLA is about to switch conferences with all the logistical and other challenges that move entails.

Delayed Deadline

Saturday, February 10, 2024



In case you hadn't heard, there was a snafu in getting the new FAFSA forms ready for potential college students to fill out. (FAFSA = Free Application for Federal Student Aid.) Many high school students need to know how much aid is available before accepting college admission offers. From the LA Times:

The University of California and California State University announced Wednesday they are extending the May 1 deadline for students to accept their admission offers for fall 2024, citing delays applicants are facing in completing a new federal financial aid form. The extension affects tens of thousands of California students who will be accepted to UC and CSU, largely beginning in March. A May 15 deadline will apply to first-year students at all nine undergraduate UC campuses; CSU's deadline is "no earlier" than May 15 for all 23 of its campuses.

A new version of the form, known as the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, was unveiled late last year with the promise that it would be simpler to complete and would increase the amount of financial aid available for many students. The form is used by colleges to determine financial need and craft an aid offer. But significant delays in the federal government's release of the new form, along with numerous glitches in using it, have created havoc at many high schools, which are reporting a dramatic decline in the number of students who have so far successfully completed the form...

Full story at <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-02-07/uc-csu-extend-college-commitment-date-citing-fafsa-turmoil>.

It might be noted that other universities are also extending their deadlines:

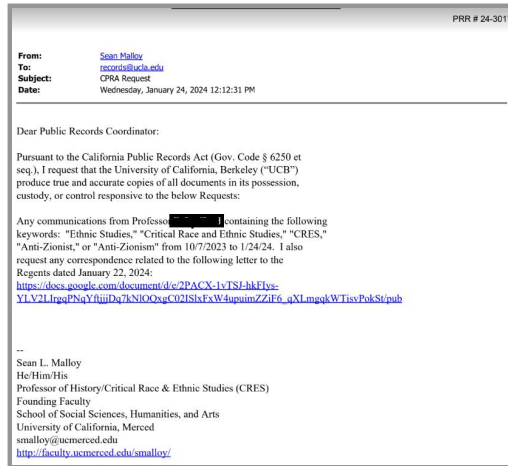
<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/08/business/fafsa-delays-financial-aid.html>.

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Apart from the delay, the fact that the FAFSA website was not able to operate properly on time is somewhat similar to the website failure in the early days of the Obamacare health insurance exchange. Heads should have rolled for that fiasco, but didn't. Will there be any rolling heads in DC this time?

Caution: Double-Edged Sword

Saturday, February 10, 2024



Click on image to clarify Anyone can file a request at UC under the California Public Records Act to see emails, etc., on any subject. There are some exceptions about what will be disclosed.

The problem - particularly if the filer is also a UC employee - is that there could be a similar request, tit for tat, for the filer's emails. Potentially a double-edged sword.

In the past, this tactic has been used to harass faculty such as climate scientists in the hopes of discrediting their work or finding something - perhaps out of context - that seems embarrassing. *But typically, the filers are from outside groups.*

A UCLA faculty member sent me a copy of such a request recently filed by a faculty member at Merced. So this is one faculty member harassing another - not a good look.

Advice from yours truly: Email in particular should not be viewed as "private." Don't put anything in an email that you might regret disclosing. Even apart from formal Public Records requests, emails can be forwarded hither and yon, intentionally or accidentally.



Further advice: If a UC faculty member wants information from another UC faculty member, maybe - you know - just pick up the phone and have, like, a conversation. Just a thought...

Shooting Reported on Berkeley Campus Last Night

Saturday, February 10, 2024



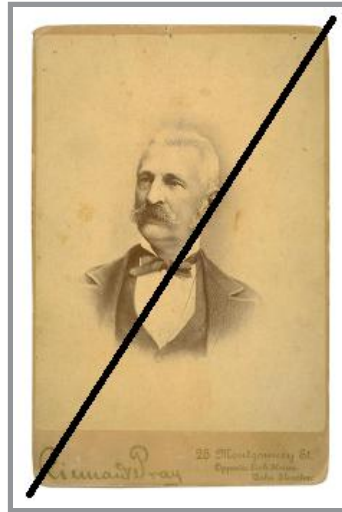
<https://twitter.com/dailycal/status/1756195984361894312>

News reports indicate someone is arrested with no further details:

[https://www.berkeleyside.org/2024/02/10/1-arrested-shooting-cal.](https://www.berkeleyside.org/2024/02/10/1-arrested-shooting-cal)

No Hastings

Sunday, February 11, 2024



Hastings From the *San Francisco Chronicle*: A judge found that an 1878 California law saying the state’s law school in San Francisco “shall forever be known” as Hastings College of the Law was not a binding contract, but simply an ordinary statute that future lawmakers were free to amend or repeal. That means the state did not violate a binding promise to Serranus Hastings by changing the school’s name last year to the University of California College of the Law, San Francisco, Superior Court Judge Richard Ulmer said Tuesday [Feb. 6]. The change was based on evidence that Hastings had ordered troops to slaughter thousands of Native Americans in the 1860s. The suit by Hastings’ descendants sought \$1.7 billion in damages and interest.

The law “ ‘authorized’ S.C. Hastings to found the law college” in his name but did not bind the state to keep his name attached permanently and was “not cast in covenanting language,” Ulmer said in a ruling dismissing the lawsuit.

While the 1878 law committed Serranus Hastings to pay the state \$100,000 to establish the school, Ulmer said, there was no evidence that the payment was intended to keep his name on the school. He also rejected a claim that the change violated the California Constitution, which requires UC to remain “free of all political or sectarian influence.” The 2022 state law that changed the name was passed in response to a request by the law school’s own policymaking board, Ulmer said, and the case “therefore does not present the situation where the Legislature is attempting to dictate University policy.” ...

Full story at <https://www.sfchronicle.com/politics/article/uc-hastings-lawsuit-tossed-18653802.php>.

Does UC Health expansion have any limits?

Sunday, February 11, 2024



Chicken heart

As blog readers will know, UCLA is buying hospitals, West Hills most recently, a mid-city hospital so not long ago. And, of course, Santa Monica Hospital in the more distant past.

UC-San Francisco is absorbing St. Mary's and St. Francis. Now UC-SF is trying to acquire Madera Community Hospital. See:

<https://calmatters.org/health/2024/02/madera-community-hospital-ucsf/>

Is there any limit to the expansion? Maybe:

Or direct to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iZ6HPGr6Lsg>.

Slowly Grinding Wheels - Part 2

Monday, February 12, 2024



As blog readers will know from a prior post, the *Klein vs. Bernardo* trial is due to start on March 4 in a Santa Monica court.* The case goes back to 2020 and involves a lecturer at the Anderson School and events immediately following the George Floyd demonstrations. Yours truly has now seen estimates of the damages claimed ranging from \$10 million to \$19 million, based on a claim by Klein of reputational damage that led to lost outside income.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/01/slowly-grinding-wheels.html>.

Student-Worker Strike Repercussions - Part 27

Monday, February 12, 2024



Repercussions of the student-worker strike at UC continue. Blog readers may recall that during the strike, campus payroll systems continued paying strikers; apparently, UC in many cases had no way of determining who was on strike. UC-Irvine it seems subsequently required student-workers to report whether they participated in the strike. Grievances were filed regarding these requirements, resulting in the California Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) decision below:

Decision 2889H – Regents of the University of California (Irvine)

LA-CE-1395-H

Decision Date: February 9, 2024

Decision Type: PERB Decision (Non-Precedential)

Description: Charging Parties, five UC Irvine (UCI) employees in two UAW-represented bargaining units, filed grievances alleging that UCI violated the applicable MOU for each bargaining unit by requiring Charging Parties to report their participation (if any) in a strike. UCI refused to process Charging Parties' grievances because UAW had filed a systemwide grievance regarding the same violations. Charging Parties allege that UCI violated HEERA by refusing to allow them to present grievances through a representative of their own choosing. PERB's Office of the General Counsel (OGC) dismissed the charge for failure to state a prima facie case.

Disposition: In a non-precedential decision, the Board reversed and remanded to OGC to issue a complaint. The applicable MOUs permitted Charging Parties to file their own grievances and pursue them via a representative of their own choosing, at all stages prior to arbitration. Therefore, the charge stated a prima facie case that UCI failed or refused to process Charging Parties' grievances in violation of HEERA's qualified right to self-representation.

Source: <https://perb.ca.gov/decision/2889H/>.

Note that issuing a complaint does not resolve the case, one way or another. It is just the start of a PERB review. Apparently, the OGC initially thought there was no obvious violation of the applicable state labor law, but the Board reversed, setting in motion a more thorough review.

New Coach

Monday, February 12, 2024



UCLA has hired former associated head coach and running backs coach DeShaun Foster to become the Bruins' next head coach. Foster will return to his alma mater after briefly being hired away from Westwood to become the running backs coach for the Las Vegas Raiders...

The former All-American started his coaching career in 2012 as a student assistant before he was promoted to graduate assistant in 2014 and the director of player development and high school relations in 2015. Foster spent the 2016 season on Kliff Kingsbury's staff at Texas Tech, where he had his first opportunity as a running backs coach. He would return to Westwood in 2017 as the running backs coach. Chip Kelly promoted Foster to associate head football coach after helping churn out NFL quality running backs...

Full story at <https://www.dailynews.com/2024/02/12/deshaun-foster-named-as-uclas-new-football-coach/>.

As we noted on Friday, this turnover is occurring just as UCLA switches athletic conferences with all the attendant logistical and other problems:

<https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/02/kelly-to-depart.html>.

Sink Hole Problem on the 405 at Sepulveda Pass

Monday, February 12, 2024



Loyd Sigmon after
whom SigAlerts are
named*

This bulletin from the [Santa Monica Patch](#) suggests there could be a problem for those leaving UCLA today who drive through the Sepulveda Pass:

A SigAlert has been issued for the northbound San Diego (405) Freeway in the Sepulveda Pass where a sinkhole opened up on an offramp Monday morning, according to Caltrans.

Caltrans is reporting a SigAlert and indefinite closure of the northbound Skirball Center Drive /Mulholland Drive offramp as of 11:30 a.m. Monday to repair a large dip or sinkhole.

Drivers are advised to avoid the area or seek alternate routes until the repair work is completed. Caltrans has not released an estimate for when the work will be done.

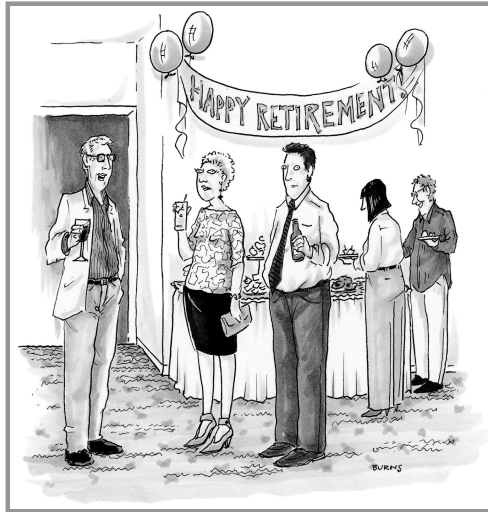
Full story at <https://patch.com/california/santamonica/s/iureo/405-sigalert-sinkhole-shuts-down-sepulveda-pass-offramp>.

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* <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/the-sig-files/>.

UC Retirement Savings Webinars

Tuesday, February 13, 2024



There's even one today:

13 Feb: **Mindful Investing**

Learn how your personality influences money and investing decisions, and the impact emotions can have when it comes to money. Available times: 1:00 PM PST

14 Feb: **Guide to Investing in the UC Retirement Savings Program**

How to build an investment strategy based on risk tolerance, investing horizon and involvement level, and the investment options available through UC's 403(b), 457(b) and DC plans. Available times: noon PST

15 Feb: **Ways to Save with Roth**

The Ways to Save with Roth webinar is designed to help you understand the new Roth option in the UC Retirement Savings Plan. Available times: noon PST

20 Feb: **Women & Investing: Organize, Plan, Own Your Future**

Learn simple steps you can take to build healthy financial habits, save for multiple goals and invest wisely. Available times: noon PST

21 Feb: **Understanding the Basics of Social Security**

Social Security may be an important income source for retirement. Learn about key Social Security claiming ages and how your benefit is calculated, so you can better understand the choices. Available times: 9:00 AM PST

22 Feb: **Guide to Investing in the UC Retirement Savings Program**

How to build an investment strategy based on risk tolerance, investing horizon and involvement level, and the investment options available through UC's 403(b), 457(b) and DC plans. Available times: 1:00 PM PST

27 Feb: Understanding the Basics of Social Security (Spanish)

Si considera que el Seguro Social será su principal fuente de ingresos durante su jubilación, entérese de cuándo y cómo reclamar su beneficio. Available times: noon PST

28 Feb: Mindful Investing

Learn how your personality influences money and investing decisions, and the impact emotions can have when it comes to money. Available times: 9:00 AM PST

29 Feb: Ways to Save with Roth

The Ways to Save with Roth webinar is designed to help you understand the new Roth option in the UC Retirement Savings Plan. Available times: 1:00 PM PST

Registration for the online classes above at <https://myucreirement.com/Classes/ClassSchedule/19>.

Need for a New Master Plan - Once Again

Tuesday, February 13, 2024



Gov. Pat Brown receives Master Plan

from UC President Clark Kerr From time to time, we point to the fact that the old Master Plan of 1960, which provided for a division of labor between UC, CSU, and the community colleges is indeed old. In fact, it expired in 1975, although people keep referring to it. The impetus behind the old plan was that the three segments were operating independently and overlapping their functions.

As the plan has decayed, community colleges keep coming up with BAs and CSU with PhDs. Now maybe that's all fine. But no one has looked at public higher ed recently in California to see if some revision of the old Master Plan is needed.

Inside Higher Ed recently noted yet another community college bachelor's degree may be in the works:

California community colleges could begin offering bachelor's degree programs in nursing under a new pilot program proposed in a recent state Senate bill. Community college leaders are celebrating the bill as a way to expand access to more affordable bachelor of science in nursing (B.S.N.) programs and fill critical nursing shortages in the state. California State University officials, however, have expressed concerns that new programs will cause undue competition.

Senate Bill 895, authored by state senator Richard D. Roth, would allow the chancellor of the community college system to choose up to 15 community college districts that already provide nursing associate degrees to offer B.S.N. programs. These new programs would be limited in size at up to a quarter of colleges' nursing associate degree enrollments or 35 students, whichever is greater...*

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/institutions/community-colleges/2024/02/09/bill-raises-hopes-bsn-programs-two-year-colleges>.

So, again, we point to the need for a new Master Plan.

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*The bill is at:

<https://legiscan.com/CA/text/SB895/id/2868455>.

I dissent again (in part)

Tuesday, February 13, 2024



Blog readers will know that yours truly has recently dissented from statements that appear (if you use a PC to read this blog) up in the right hand corner. Today's personal commentary deals with two statements. One objects to the the Regents' attempt to limit departmental political statements. Another wants charges to be dropped against demonstrators at the recent Regents meeting who disrupted the proceedings.* The language accompanying the latter is unhelpful and inflammatory. But if folks think protests at the Regents that become intemperate are helpful to their cause, my sense is that wide latitude should be given. In my view, however, such behavior tends to be performative and often turns off many more people than it attracts. It tends, in short, to be counter-productive to whatever cause is being fostered. But, if folks want to do it, wide latitude should be given.

Barnard recently banned departmental statements. The Barnard ban had nothing to do with defining "landing pages" of departmental websites, an issue that - among others - bogged down the Regents. It just says departments don't make political statements in any forum, whether websites or others.**

Here's the problem. Departments are groups of people carrying out some common function. They have views only in the sense that corporations sometimes claim to have views. But really it is individuals that have views. When departments - particularly at public universities - issue political statements, such views are potentially coercive to students, non-ladder faculty, junior ladder faculty, staff, and applicants for positions at such departments (staff or faculty) who may disagree. The Academic Senate came up with guidelines that attempted to deal with such issues - but those guidelines (presenting dissenting views, etc.) have been ignored. That ignoring of the guidelines is what invited the Regents into the debate. Normally, the Regents prefer to leave such matters to the Senate.

In the view of yours truly, individuals should be the beneficiary of the notion of academic freedom. Individuals can express views on political matters in various forums and formats. They can write op eds, they can tweet, they can talk at events, etc. As

individuals, they can co-express such opinions. Departments, as departments, and particularly at public universities, should not.

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* <https://cucfa.org/2024/02/drop-the-charges-against-january-regents-meeting-protectors/>; <https://cucfa.org/2024/02/objection-to-proposed-new-website-policy/>.

** ... *Barnard has added a policy that was shared with faculty via email on Nov. 6 that requires departments to run by administrators any changes they want to post to their websites. In a statement emailed to Inside Higher Ed, a Barnard spokesperson explained that under the new approval process, “the provost reviews proposed departmental website edits for editorial integrity and academic relevance.”*

The college also expanded its definition of political statements—which are barred from both barnard.edu websites and signs on campus—to include “all written communications that comment on specific actions, statements, or positions taken by public officials or governmental bodies at local, state, federal, and international levels; attempt to influence legislation; or otherwise advocate for an outcome related to actions by legislative, executive, judicial, or administrative bodies at local, state, federal, and international levels.” ...

Source: <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/faculty-issues/academic-freedom/2024/01/26/uc-system-barnard-debate-departmental-political>. Note that Barnard is a private institution so its potential latitude for political speech is wider than that of public institutions.

New Coach - Part 2

Tuesday, February 13, 2024



From the Daily Bruin: ... *[Athletic Director Martin] Jarmond said [new football coach DeShaun] Foster will be provided whatever he needs in order to transform the program. "Make no mistake – and I want to be clear with this – DeShaun Foster and this football program will get all the resources they need to be successful," Jarmond said. "We are all in on him and this program and going to the Big Ten."*

*On the precipice of the move to the Big Ten, Foster's hiring launches UCLA into a new era. Jarmond and Foster also laid out their plans in the evolving college football landscape as NIL and the transfer portal continue to impact recruiting. NCAA rules stipulate that players have 30 days to enter the portal after a head coach departs. **The portal opens Wednesday for UCLA players following former coach Chip Kelly's departure, but Jarmond said as of Tuesday morning no players have transferred nor expressed an intent to transfer...***

Full story at <https://dailybruin.com/2024/02/13/deshaun-foster-martin-jarmond-discuss-future-of-ucla-football-in-press-conference>.

What you should take away from this item is that with NIL we have *de facto* pay-for-play. And with a transfer portal, we have a *de facto* labor market. Presumably, one factor in the departure of current coach Chip Kelly to the NFL is that he preferred an open commercial market rather than one that pretends to be something else.

Our Traditional Valentine's Day Posting

Wednesday, February 14, 2024



This works much better if you don't ask if they are still married:*

Or direct to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c0dGRDvmO54> or <https://ia601509.us.archive.org/28/items/sacramento-city-at-risk/Trang%20and%20Nam%20Proposal%20Flash%20Mob%20at%20UCLA%209-24-11.mp4>.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2023/02/the-morning-after-post-valentines-day.html>. For those seeking truly eternal love, consider this:

Or direct to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4i96M0YDfGE>.

Looking in to the Matter

Wednesday, February 14, 2024



Remember the Shooting at Berkeley on Feb. 10? The local police are being pretty closed-mouthed about what led to the shooting by someone without an affiliation to UC-Berkeley. But beyond that issue, there have been repercussions about how students were, and weren't, notified when it occurred. Basically, students learned more from the Daily Cal than from official sources. The San Francisco Chronicle has a timeline:

Friday night was the second time UC Berkeley junior Riley Cooke planned to hang out with friends and instead ended up covering a shooting. Cooke, the university news editor for the Daily Californian student paper, was on her way to get frozen yogurt with former managing editor Anna Armstrong when their phones started buzzing with texts and Slack messages about students hearing gunshots on the south edge of campus.

Later, the university would announce that a 59-year-old man had fired several shots into the air above Lower Sproul Plaza, hitting no one, and was quickly arrested by University of California police. But the first news that a shooting had happened at all came from student journalists reporting on it, even as they themselves took shelter.

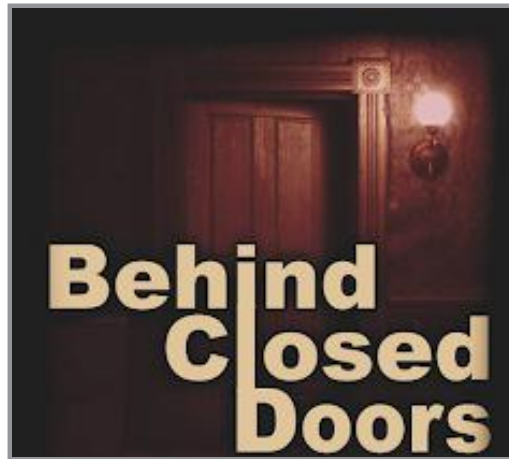
As soon as the shooting happened, information began to pour into the Daily Cal's Slack from students across campus, according to Matt Brown, the newspaper's managing editor and a former Chronicle intern. Some reporters had walked past the shooting as it happened, another had a friend who recorded a video of the incident, and yet another heard informally that police officers had already arrested the suspect, Brown said. But students didn't receive a notification about the incident or the arrest until about 40 minutes after the shots were fired.

University of California police use a system called WarnMe to communicate with students about emergencies. The first WarnMe notice about the 8:40 p.m. incident went out around 9:20 p.m. Asked about the timing of the alerts, Janet Gilmore, a spokesperson for UC Berkeley, said the university was "looking into the matter." ...

Full story at <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/uc-berkeley-shots-journalism-18660486.php>.

UCLA Chancellor Search

Wednesday, February 14, 2024



There was a meeting yesterday at UCLA of the Regents' search committee for a new UCLA chancellor to replace Gene Block.

As usual, the committee met behind closed doors so what was said or done remains unknown to outsiders.

All we can tell you is who the committee members are:

Regents Elliott, Matosantos, Reilly, Sherman, and Sures; *ex officio* members Chair Leib, and President Drake.

More on the FAFSA Screw Up

Thursday, February 15, 2024



Last week, we blogged about the FAFSA screw up, the federal website/application for student financial aid.* The tale continues. From Inside Higher Ed:

The U.S. Education Department is relaxing a number of requirements so that colleges and universities dealing with delayed student financial aid information can better focus on processing aid applications and delivering aid packages to students. The department announced today that it will reduce the proportion of financial aid forms it reviews for potential inaccuracy, suspend all new reviews of colleges' compliance with financial aid rules and offer institutions flexibility in their applications to renew their eligibility to access federal financial aid programs. Those changes build on the department's strategy, announced last week, to support colleges with the update to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, which has been plagued by delays and technical glitches...

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/government/student-aid-policy/2024/02/13/us-reduce-requirements-colleges-due-fafsa-delays>.

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*As we noted before, heads should roll in DC for this snafu. But none have or likely will.

<https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/02/delayed-deadline.html>.

Transfer Planning

Friday, February 16, 2024



Not mentioned in the story below was that UC and UCLA were not happy about this legislative and gubernatorial intervention concerning transfers to UCLA, although in the end they couldn't prevent it. Blog readers, however, will know that history.* In any event, it is happening.

From the Bruin: *UCLA will pilot an Associate Degree for Transfer Program in the 2026-2027 academic year. Established by Assembly Bill 1291, which was signed into law by Gov. Gavin Newsom in October and went into effect Jan. 1, the program will prioritize the admission of students who have completed an associate degree for transfer at a California Community Colleges' campus and meet the requirements of the UC transfer curricula for a participating campus...*

UCLA must incorporate eight majors into the CCCs' transfer model curricula by the 2026-2027 academic year and expand that number to at least 12 by the 2028-2029 academic year, according to the bill. [Academic Senate chair Andrea] Kasko said in an emailed statement that the task force will consult with transfer student representatives, campus units and departments to recommend the first series of majors, as well as goals and evaluation metrics to guide the program's future. Student representatives will be invited to task force meetings as the agendas are developed, she added...

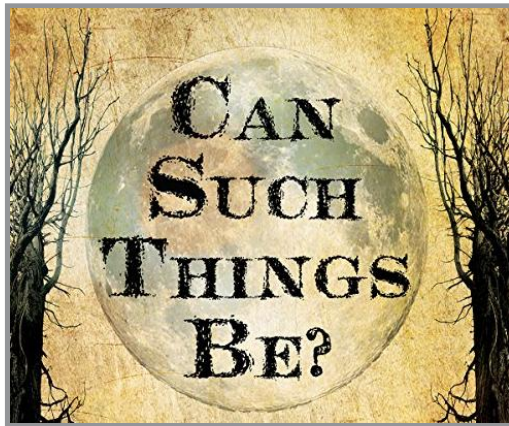
Full story at <https://dailybruin.com/2024/02/11/ucla-to-pilot-program-guaranteeing-admission-for-associate-degree-holders>.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2023/09/ab-1291-passed.html>.

One Could Ask How This Was Even Possible...

Friday, February 16, 2024



Seems like there should be systems in place for preventing someone from diverting tuition checks to a personal account without someone immediately noticing. But apparently not. From the Mercury News:

A former academic program officer for the University of California, San Francisco will serve 20 months in federal prison for diverting \$1.53 million in tuition payments into her personal bank accounts, according to authorities. Sandra Le, 55, of San Francisco, received the sentence from U.S. District Court Judge William H. Orrick on Thursday, the U.S. Attorney's Office said in a news release.

Le directed students enrolled in UCSF School of Nursing post-masters and special studies certificate programs to have their tuition checks made out to her, a merchandiser she purchased from, or to leave the payee line blank so she could make the checks out to herself or her associates, prosecutors said, citing Le's plea agreement. Prosecutors said Le deposited the checks into her bank accounts, including ones she shared with associates, and used the funds to pay for luxury items from the merchandiser, as well as for gambling, home improvement and other personal expenses.

Le concealed her conduct by creating false records of payments and enrollment for her supervisors, prosecutors said. An investigation kicked off in May 2019, when Le took a leave of absence amid increased scrutiny from UCSF's audit and advisory services unit. Prosecutors said the school could not reconcile tuition revenues with enrollment in the programs Le managed...

Full story at <https://www.mercurynews.com/2024/02/16/ucsf-administrator-sentenced-for-diverting-1-5-million-in-tuition-payments/>.

Student-Worker Strike Repercussions - Part 28

Saturday, February 17, 2024



The student-worker strike seems to have stimulated similar demands for child care provisions among faculty at UC-Santa Cruz. From the [Santa Cruz Lookout](#):

... UC Santa Cruz is the only University of California school among the nine residential campuses without a child care program that serves faculty and/or staff – the UCSC program currently serves only undergraduate and graduate students and has about 62 slots. Faculty mothers at UCSC say they face unique challenges compared to some other UC campuses, driven by the region’s high cost of living, expensive child care and limited day care spots. And they say it’s affecting their career prospects as many female academics feel pressured to choose between caring for their children and furthering their careers. And while graduate students saw a nearly 27% increase in child care reimbursements — to \$1,400 a quarter — this past October after a 2022 strike, UCSC faculty don’t receive any child care subsidy.

The result is that many of the school’s faculty mothers, particularly with children under 2½ years, simply can’t afford to pay for child care and end up scaling back their work hours when their children are young, hampering their efforts to progress in their careers, said Lindsey Dillon, an assistant professor of sociology at UCSC. “They’re working 15 to 20, maybe 25 hours a week, and they’re doing a job that is an over-40-hour-a-week job,” she said. “So what that means is that it might take longer to get tenure, people aren’t getting promoted at the same rate as other peers.”

The challenges of accessing affordable local child care in Santa Cruz have inspired more than 60 faculty members, known as the UCSC Academic Mothers, to push for a child care subsidy for tenured and tenure-eligible faculty. The group originally formed in 2016 to advocate for better policies for faculty parents — specifically mothers.

After finalizing their proposal during a group meeting Monday, Dillon, who chairs the group, says they plan to make a proposal similar to what graduate students recently won through their strike at the end of 2022. Until the campus provides staff and faculty child care – through the center that will be built at Student Housing West – faculty are requesting a \$1,350 child care subsidy to offset costs of finding care for children under 5

years old.

Dillon said the faculty union will present the proposal at the union's next labor relations meeting with campus administration in about a month...

Full story at <https://lookout.co/uc-santa-cruz-faculty-mothers-say-lack-of-child-care-hurting-their-academic-careers/>.

Maybe There Needs to Be More Direction as We Shovel Out \$7 Million

Saturday, February 17, 2024



A news report indicates that UC-Santa Cruz has its share of the \$7 million that UC president Drake set aside ostensibly for some kind of "neutral" education in history related to the current Middle East conflict.

With an increase in hate speech and anti-Semitism on campuses, UC Santa Cruz has received a grant to eliminate discrimination on their campus. The university confirmed that they will be receiving a \$500,000 grant from the University of California Chancellor's office as they are looking to eliminate discrimination throughout UC campuses.

UC Santa Cruz reported multiple incidents on and off campuses where students allegedly celebrated Adolf Hitler's birthday cake and hate symbols along with anti-Semitic and anti-LGBTQIA+ filer on their windshield. Anju Reejhsingshani who is the vice chancellor for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for the University says the funding is not just about safety and security but building a stronger community.

"The goal is to bring in specialists who can talk to our community members around antisemitism, Islamophobia, forms of hate that affect, different religious and ethnic and racial minority groups," Reejhsinghani said.

As a system wide imitative, \$7 million will be going to various UC campuses in total. The funding will be directed towards mental health and trauma support plus leadership training for students and staff.

Source: <https://kion546.com/top-stories/2024/02/13/uc-santa-cruz-receives-grant-to-tackle-anti-semitism-and-hate-speech-on-campus/>.

This is all very nice but doesn't sound like what the money was supposed to fund. As we have noted in earlier posts, Dartmouth seems to have pioneered programs in which there are dialogues directed specifically toward the Israel-Gaza situation by experts with different perspectives but who can hold a civil discussion and can engage rather than make statements.

UCLA, before any UCOP money arrived, had such a dialogue for the med school:

<https://archive.org/details/ucla-med-school-dialogue-12-20-2023>.

Hopefully, there will be more, with or without the money.

New Coach - Part 3

Sunday, February 18, 2024



We noted in our last post (Part 2) that with NIL (name-image-likeness) payments now on the table, the college athletics field - at least those sports which are the money-makers - is becoming a commercial labor market.* Just to make that point clear, consider this from the Bruin:

... [UCLA Athletic Director Martin] Jarmond dispelled the notion that the program isn't in tune with the evolving NIL scene but said there's room for growth under Foster. "Everybody doesn't know what everybody has. Every school says that they need more, but there's a lot of numbers out there that don't mean anything, so I don't buy stock in, 'We're so behind,'" Jarmond said. "The fact is, we have guys that have NIL on the roster this year – we have plenty of them. Now, we've got to do that more."

The fourth-year athletic director said UCLA has, at times, been slow to respond to changing NIL regulations, but added that he's had appointments with around 16 donors in the past three weeks. He and Foster plan to meet with more in the coming days.

At the crux of a turning point in UCLA football history, Foster wasted little time in connecting with fans. Just four hours after he was formally introduced, Men of Westwood – UCLA Athletics' official NIL collective – posted a video on X, the platform formerly known as Twitter, in which Foster asked Bruin fans for financial support...

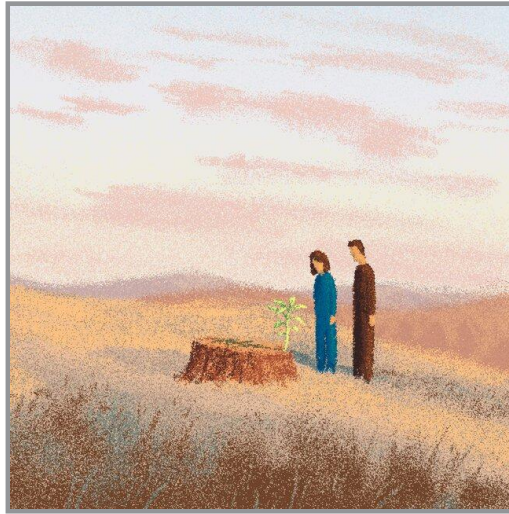
Full story at <https://dailybruin.com/2024/02/14/our-brand-is-nationally-foster-jarmond-discuss-boosting-nil-in-coming-years>.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/02/new-coach-part-2.html>.

Rising from the Dead

Sunday, February 18, 2024



The issue of UC hiring undocumented students has potentially been revived by the legislature. As blog readers will know, the Regents - after considering the issue in a special committee over several months - ultimately effectively killed the proposal on grounds of legal risk. From the Sacramento Bee:

The push to allow California universities and colleges to employ undocumented students without legal work permits is moving forward with the support of some California lawmakers. Assemblyman David Alvarez, D-San Diego, introduced historic legislation this week that would direct the University of California, California State University and California Community Colleges systems to employ these students who often struggle to secure paid, on-campus jobs, internships and research opportunities. "They're unable to use their talents to work, so this bill is just focused on giving those young people that opportunity," Alvarez said in an interview with The Sacramento Bee...*

Full story at <https://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article285577557.html>.

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* T h e b i l l i s a t
https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240AB2586.

Watch the Regents Full Board Meeting of Feb. 14

Monday, February 19, 2024



Initially, a meeting of the Health Services Committee was scheduled for Feb. 14. But that meeting split into two: Health Services in the morning and a full board meeting in the afternoon, the latter to deal with an issue left over from January, a ban on fully-online undergraduate degree programs that had been proposed by the Academic Senate. Here we deal with the Board meeting. We will take up Health Services in a later post.

Essentially, with the push to create online courses, it became - or might become - possible for an undergraduate to enroll only in online courses and get a degree. The Senate viewed this development as a kind of accidental online program that hadn't been reviewed as such. It thus tried to implement a ban (with some wriggle room for deliberate creation of online programs.) The Regents - who had a more favorable view of potential online degree programs - intervened and put the item on its agenda.

The position of the Senate - expressed by faculty rep Steintrager - was that purely online education had drawbacks such as lower completion rates and accreditation issues. Students fully online would not benefit from such on-campus athletics, research opportunities, etc.

But sitting in the background is a task force of the UC president which is exploring the matter further. So, that opened the door to the argument for waiting for the task force report instead of an immediate ban.

Regent Pérez moved to approve the Senate's position but no Regent would second the motion so it died. Pérez's fear, expressed later, was that online ed would become the poor students' track, since not living on campus would likely reduce cost and debt. Lieutenant Governor Kounalakis tended to echo the concerns about a poor students' track. Provost Newman, in contrast, pushed the let's-wait-for-the-task-force approach. UC president Drake did not make detailed remarks but he clearly opposed the ban. Irvine chancellor Gillman said his business school faculty wanted to develop an online program but the proposed Senate ban halted the effort. Regent Park said a total ban was extreme and would limit innovation. In the end, the ban was rejected.

In addition, the Regents approved tuition increases for several professional programs.

As always, we preserve recording of Regents meetings since the Regents have no policy on duration of preservation. You can see the board session at:

https://ia601308.us.archive.org/9/items/health-services-committee_202402/Board.mp4.

Missing the Forecast

Monday, February 19, 2024



The latest controller's monthly report indicates that state general fund revenues are \$29.5 billion below the levels forecast back when the current state budget was enacted in June. They are also \$6.4 billion below what was forecast in January when the governor made his proposal for the 2024-25 budget. Much of the gap comes from personal income taxes - probably in the capital gains category.

The latest figures are at <https://sco.ca.gov/Files-ARD/CASH/January2024StatementofGeneralFundCashReceiptsandDisbursements.pdf>.

The impact could be nil

Tuesday, February 20, 2024



Exciting as the item below may seem, if NIL is to be used as a recruitment tool, selling items related to high school recruits who have yet to make a name for themselves is at best a limited incentive:

UCLA Has Now Launched An NIL Store for Bruins Players: Dress like your favorite Bruin.

MAREN ANGUS-COOMBS FEB 16, 2024 Sports Illustrated

The NIL Store powered by Campus Ink announced the launch of its NIL Store featuring officially licensed UCLA merchandise on Friday. The store will provide opportunities to every UCLA athlete. The Campus Ink NIL Store website featuring UCLA will continuously be onboarding new athletes and developing custom merchandise drops for individual athletes. All merchandise on the NIL Store is officially licensed by UCLA. Each student-athlete's digital locker room includes a collection of core products which feature personalized names and numbers for applicable athletes...*

Full story at <https://www.si.com/college/ucla/news/ucla-has-now-launched-a-nil-store-for-bruins-players-mac4>.

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**Note: Backed by Mark Cuban, Campus Ink expanded into the Name, Image, Likeness (NIL) space in 2021 and launched the NIL Store, which serves as a merchandising solution for student-athletes and schools across the country. The NIL Store operates with the firm belief that every student-athlete has an opportunity to capitalize on their NIL and should earn industry-leading payouts. Campus Ink was founded in 1947 on the campus of the University of Illinois and was reimagined in 2015 with an office in downtown Chicago and a production facility in Urbana, Ill., where the company handles all of its own production and fulfillment.*

Source: <https://ucla.nil.store/blogs/news/campus-ink-officially-launches-ucla-nil-store-featuring-officially-licensed-ucla-merchandise>.

Another Possible Biden Jam Today

Tuesday, February 20, 2024



From the [Santa Monica Daily Press](#) today:

President Joe Biden heads to California today looking to soak up more cash for his reelection bid during a three-day swing through the state.

Biden will arrive at LAX mid afternoon before taking his usual helicopter ride to the Santa Monica Airport (SMO). His official schedule has him landing at SMO at about 3:30 p.m. although there's been a wide margin of error on the precise time for past trips...

Full story at <https://smdp.com/2024/02/20/biden-to-pass-through-santa-monica-gain-to-rev-up-his-fundraising-in-anticipation-of-a-costly-rematch-with-trump/>.

New UCOP Office of Civil Rights

Tuesday, February 20, 2024



President Drake announces new Systemwide Office of Civil Rights

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

A message to the UC community from President Michael V. Drake, M.D.

Dear UC colleagues:

Over the past several years, we have worked collectively as a university community to create a safer, more welcoming learning, working, and living environment for all. These efforts have translated into a number of significant systemwide initiatives that are helping us improve our ability to prevent, detect, and respond to all forms of harassment and discrimination. I want to thank the UC community for your ongoing engagement and thoughtful feedback in these endeavors.

Today, I'm pleased to share another important milestone in this work: the launch of the University of California's first Systemwide Office of Civil Rights. **This new umbrella office will provide systemwide leadership, guidance and support on issues related to protecting civil rights at our 10 campuses, medical centers, national labs, and the UC Office of the President. It will encompass the existing Systemwide Title IX Office, a new Systemwide Anti-Discrimination Office, and a new Systemwide Disability Rights Office.** The executive director of this new office will report directly to me, and we are in the final stages of a national search for this important position. I expect we will be able to announce their appointment in the coming weeks.

We are creating the Systemwide Office of Civil Rights proactively — not in response to any particular incident, but rather in response to feedback from the UC community and based on the recommendation of a systemwide working group charged with developing the University's Anti-Discrimination Policy. The working group's process was informed by the University's Systemwide Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy, UC campuses' current non-discrimination policies, and policies at UC comparator institutions

of higher education. The working group found that UC students, staff, and faculty would greatly benefit from centralized oversight of these functions and a more consistent approach to how the University responds to allegations of discrimination and harassment. **Recent events on campuses across the country have only reaffirmed the need for such a function. The new office will ensure uniform interpretation and implementation of related UC policies across our locations and provide comprehensive and consistent policies, guidance, training, education, and investigative support to UC offices responsible for preventing and responding to harassment or discrimination on the basis of protected categories such as race, religion, and disability.**

We want the University of California to be a fair and just learning, working, and living environment free of discrimination, and we must be responsive when issues arise that hinder us from achieving that goal. The Systemwide Office of Civil Rights will help us do that by supporting and enhancing the critical services that existing campus offices already provide. You can learn more about this new office, including how to get help if you are experiencing harassment or discrimination, here: <https://ucop.edu/civil-rights/>.

Sincerely,

Michael V. Drake, MD

President

Source: <https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/2024/02/president-drake-announces-new-systemwide-office-of-civil-rights.html>.

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Dear Bruin Community:

We write today with important news. As President Drake announced in a letter to the UC community issued this morning, the University of California has launched a new Systemwide Office of Civil Rights (SOCR), an umbrella office that will “provide systemwide leadership, guidance and support on issues related to protecting civil rights at our 10 campuses, medical centers, national labs and the UC Office of the President”.

In form and function, the SOCR is very similar to the UCLA Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Civil Rights Office (EDI-CRO), which was established in 2020, and which supports all of UCLA’s campus and UCLA Health. EDI-CRO ensures that UCLA remains in compliance with applicable federal law, state law and UC policy concerning protections under Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and equal employment opportunity and affirmative action obligations.

In addition to the launch of the SOCR, today is also significant because it marks the issuance of the new UC Anti-Discrimination Policy, which will further strengthen UCLA’s ability to advance equality for all members of our community. The new policy applies to all UC employees as well as undergraduate, graduate and professional students, and third parties (which includes patients at UCLA Health). Pursuant to the policy, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Civil Rights Chandra Bhatnagar has been designated UCLA’s Local Implementation Officer to oversee implementation of the policy. As a reminder, if you have experienced discrimination or harassment at UCLA or if you are aware of another

member of the Bruin community who has experienced discrimination or harassment, please contact us via the EDI-CRO Report an Incident page to share your experience.

Sincerely,

Mitchell Chang

Interim Vice Provost for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Chandra Bhatnagar

Assistant Vice Chancellor for Civil Rights

Mystery Bill

Wednesday, February 21, 2024



The full text of Senate Bill 1160 (Dodd) reads as follows:

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. It is the intent of the Legislature to enact subsequent legislation that would establish reporting requirements on public postsecondary educational institutions relating to the prevention of discrimination.

S o u r c e :
<https://legiscan.com/CA/text/SB1166/2023#:~:text=This%20bill%20would%20declare%20the,to%20the%20prevention%20of%20discrimination.>

An item in the Fresno Bee* suggests the bill has something to do with concerns over sexual harassment. These placeholder bills are filed when the author intends to come up with something eventually.

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* <https://www.fresnobee.com/news/politics-government/article285535582.html>.

Take backs

Wednesday, February 21, 2024



As we have noted from the most recent controller's statement, the revenue forecasts that were the foundation of the governor's budget proposal of last month now seem to be overoptimistic.*

The Legislative Analyst's Office has come to the same conclusion and is looking for more ways to cut the budget.** Only a few touch on UC. LAO in particular wants to take back from this year's budget (2023-24):

UC Cancer Research Relating to Firefighters \$7 million

UC Berkeley School of Journalism Police Records Access Project \$7 million

UC Los Angeles Ralph J. Bunche Center \$5 million

UC Davis Equine Performance and Rehabilitation Center \$5 million

Whether this money has already been spent is unclear.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/02/missing-forecast.html>.

** <https://lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/4850>.

Insurance Issue

Thursday, February 22, 2024



Received by email:

Dear Colleagues:

Re: Farmers Insurance – Benefit Changes that require immediate action by policy holders

As you know, the University of California offers Homeowner/Auto Insurance as a benefit. Please note that this plan is managed by the UC Partnership Programs (UCPP) and not by the UCOP Health & Welfare Benefits team. At UCPP's request we are sharing the following information:

Significant changes in the California insurance landscape have made Farmers unable to renew current Farmers GroupSelect home and auto policies upon expiration. Members already may have received or will soon receive a non-renewal notice for those policies.

If participants have a current home or auto insurance policy through UC with Farmers GroupSelect and want to ensure new coverage upon expiration of that policy, they must contact Farmers now at 1-855-246-0285.

Attached is a memo from Farmers Insurance and UC Partnership Programs posted in UCnet at:

<https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/2024/02/farmers-insurance-changes-require-your-action-now.html>

Please help us by sharing this update.

Arn Olano

Benefits Analyst, UCLA Campus Human Resources

Faculty Club Positions

Friday, February 23, 2024



Received from the Faculty Club:

The Faculty Club Board has several openings to begin in September 2024 for President, President Elect, Treasurer (all are Members of the Executive Committee), and four Board Members-at-Large (for 1, 2, or 3-year terms). We are soliciting candidates now for elections that will be held in April 2024.

The Faculty Club Bylaws state that the members of the Board are expected to be in good standing with respect to membership accounts and be active supporters of the FC. All are expected to attend Board meetings held a minimum of eight times a year. The President Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer are Officers of the Association and serve on the Executive Committee which also meets the week before the Board meetings. Members-at-Large attend Board meetings monthly and serve on at least one Committee. Further details of the roles of President Elect, Secretary and Treasurer are available in the bylaws on the FC website <https://facultyclub.ucla.edu/about-us> where current Board members are also listed.

Any individual interested in running for the open seats on the FC Board may contact the Nominating Committee at this email nominations@fc.ucla.edu.

Readers may know that there has been some turmoil in Club leadership. There have also been concerns about Club finances. See: <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/02/faculty-club-concerns.html>.

Are there lectures after death?

Friday, February 23, 2024



Of course, it has long been possible to video-record lectures - particularly those on Zoom or similar platforms, and play them back in the future. However, such recordings are 2D.

But word comes from Inside Higher Ed of use of holograms - 3D images - for teaching purposes.* So you don't have to be there. Your image could give lectures, even after you expired. Maybe it's time for Name-Image-Likeness concerns to be extended to faculty. Just a thought...

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* <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/tech-innovation/teaching-learning/2024/02/23/holograms-begin-beaming-classrooms>.

Fox for Sale - Part 3 (sold)

Saturday, February 24, 2024



We have been tracking the fate of the Fox Theater in Westwood which has been up for sale.* It now has been sold. From the NY Times:

With the moviegoing experience under threat from streaming services and ever-improving home entertainment options, a group with a passionate interest in its preservation — three dozen filmmakers who create their works for the big screen, to be enjoyed in the company of large audiences — has decided to do something about it.

The group of directors, led by Jason Reitman — whose films include “Juno,” “Up in the Air” and “Ghostbusters: Afterlife” — announced Wednesday that it had bought the Village Theater in the Westwood neighborhood of Los Angeles, which was put up for sale last summer to the concern of film buffs. The group, which also includes Christopher Nolan, Steven Spielberg, Lulu Wang and Alfonso Cuarón, among others, plans to restore the 93-year-old movie palace, which features one of the largest screens in Los Angeles...

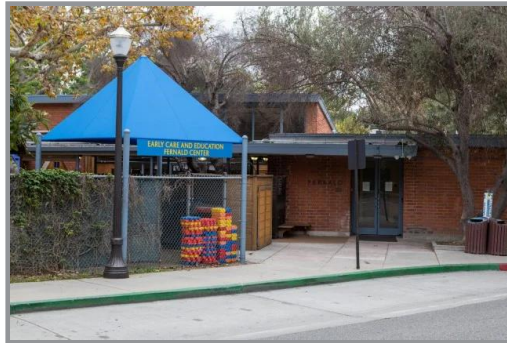
Once renovated, the Village Theater will showcase a mixture of first-run films and repertory programming curated by the group. The collective also intends to keep the theater open while plans for a restaurant, bar and gallery are finalized. Reitman said that the group was in talks with existing exhibitors about management of the day-to-day operations of the theater, but did not reveal who.

The Village Theater was put up for sale last summer for \$12 million, and the filmmakers — many of whom are alumni of nearby U.C.L.A. — were fearful it would be torn down and turned into condominiums or a space for retail. The existential threat about the future of theatrical moviegoing also loomed over this endeavor...

Full story at <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/21/movies/jason-reitman-buys-village-theater.html>. === * <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/02/fox-for-sale-part-2.html>; <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2023/07/fox-for-sale.html>.

Childcare Issues

Saturday, February 24, 2024



From the Bruin: *An Early Care and Education caregiver was arrested Wednesday on five misdemeanor charges, including sexual battery, false imprisonment and willful cruelty to a child. Christopher Rodriguez worked for the University Village ECE Center from 2001 to 2020, as well as the Krieger Center from 1999 to 2001 and from 2020 to his leave. The UCLA Early Child Care and Education Centers, which include Krieger and University Village, provide care for children ages two months to six years for UCLA-affiliated families.*

Although he was only charged by UCPD yesterday, he has been on academic leave since Dec. 18 following the beginning of a Title IX investigation. According to an email sent to ECE families, the reports of inappropriate behavior that led to Rodriguez's arrests involved mandated reports to the Child Abuse Hotline, the Department of Social Services/Community Care Licensing Division and UCPD.

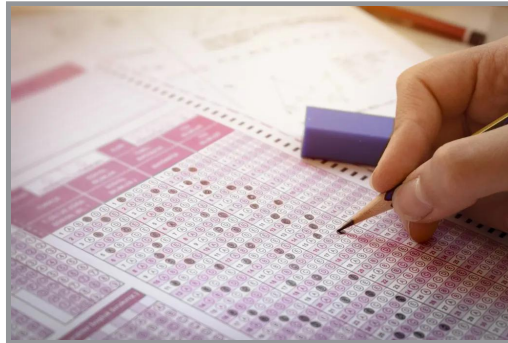
In the email, Krieger staff said they have taken precautionary measures in response to the allegations, including changing the gate code, reminding teachers to be diligent in their observations and requesting additional UCPD patrol on the campus...

Full story at <https://dailybruin.com/2024/02/22/ucla-ece-caregiver-arrested-for-sexual-battery-willful-cruelty-to-a-child>.

Yours truly senses a lawsuit coming.

The SAT Again - Part 2

Sunday, February 25, 2024



From the NY Times: *Yale University will require standardized test scores for admission for students applying to enter for the class entering in the fall of 2025, becoming the second Ivy League university to abandon test-optional policies that had been widely embraced during the Covid pandemic. Yale officials said in an announcement on Thursday that the shift to test-optional policies might have unwittingly harmed students from lower-income families whose test scores could have helped their chances. While it will require standardized tests, Yale said its policy would be “test flexible,” permitting students to submit scores from subject-based Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate tests in lieu of SAT or ACT scores.*

Yale’s decision, which will not affect students who applied during the current admissions cycle, followed a similar decision in February from Dartmouth College. Dartmouth, in Hanover, N.H., said an analysis had found that hundreds of students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds who had solid scores — in the 1,400 range on the SAT — had declined to submit them, fearing that they fell too far below the perfect 1,600. In 2022, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology announced that it had reinstated its testing requirement...

The anti-testing movement has long said that standardized tests help fuel inequality, because many students from affluent families use tutors and coaches to bolster their scores. But recent research has questioned whether test-optional policies may actually hurt the very students they were meant to help.

In January, Opportunity Insights, a group of economists based at Harvard, published a study that found that test scores could help identify lower-income students and students from underrepresented populations who would thrive in college. High scores from less privileged students can signal high potential. Yale, in New Haven, Conn., said that test scores were particularly valuable in evaluating students who attend high schools with fewer academic resources or college preparatory courses...

Full story at <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/22/us/yale-standardized-testing-sat-act.html>.

Neutral

Sunday, February 25, 2024



As blog readers will know, in response to campus tensions arising from the Israel-Gaza War, UC president Drake allocated \$7 million to the campuses for some kind of "neutral" programming. He didn't define exactly what that was and - apparently - the money has been distributed. Yours truly has yet to see the programming at UCLA.

One interpretation was to have dialogues with different views expressed. As far as yours truly knows, the only such program occurred at the med school before Drake's dollars had been distributed:

<https://archive.org/details/ucla-med-school-dialogue-12-20-2023>

Even that program was not made widely available. Yours truly, however, did preserve the audio at the link above.

Meanwhile, the notion of neutrality seems to have taken hold at Harvard which - with some other institutions - was the target of ongoing congressional investigations. Apparently, Harvard is setting up a committee to look into a policy of neutrality.* At Yale, there is a group of faculty pushing for a separation of "activism" from teaching.**

And at UC, there is the discussion at the Regents of departmental political statements - which presumably will be resuscitated at the March meetings.

All of these issues appear to be interrelated. Somewhat related were recent anti-Israel divestment resolutions at some UC student associations including UCLA.*** Exactly what that means in practice and whether such resolutions conflict with Regents' policy or raise other legal issues remains to be seen.

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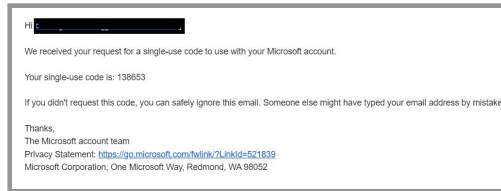
* <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2024/2/23/institutional-neutrality-feature/>.

** <https://yaledailynews.com/blog/2024/02/19/faculty-group-calls-on-yale-to-make-teaching-distinct-from-activism/>.

*** <https://dailybruin.com/2024/02/21/usac-passes-resolution-endorsing-boycott-divest-and-sanctions-movement>.

Scam Warning

Sunday, February 25, 2024



Yours truly has received lots of these messages recently at his UCLA email account. I don't know exactly what the scam is but if you get such messages, delete them. [Gmail, it might be noted, classifies them as "spam," so there must be a lot of them being sent.]

Watch the Regents' Health Services Committee Session of Feb. 14

Monday, February 26, 2024



As blog readers will know, the Regents originally had a Health Services Committee session scheduled for February 14th, an off-cycle meeting. Because there was leftover business related to online education from the January meetings, a full Board session to deal with that topic was later added to the agenda for that day. We have already covered the Board segment.*

We now (belatedly) turn to the Health Services segment. That segment began with public comment. Topics covered were several anti-Israel statements, antisemitism and departmental statements, online courses, FAFSA problems for undocumented students, Teamsters issues, recovery programs for addiction, divestment from Blackstone and hotels, funding for CARE (sexual assault) programs, anti-abortion, Blackrock, UC jobs for undocuments students, arrest of students at the prior meeting, and an alleged "extortion" at UC-Santa Barbara. A demonstration followed and a request to clear the room was made. It was unclear what happened at that point; the protesters may have left voluntarily.

There were then two items on the agenda: A strategic framework for UC Health and Student health services. It was noted that the latter was run separately from the former, even on campuses that have med centers. While there was no unhappiness with the strategic plan, there were comments from some Regents that it should be more detailed. The problem of overloaded ERs was noted. Acquisitions and affiliations were included in the strategy. Yours truly would have expected more questions about acquisitions and how management control and quality would be handled in a growing system.

With regard to student health, it was noted that the insurance system was in deficit. Students post-pandemic have substantially increased use of costly ERs and decreased routine non-ER visits. There was a suggestion that perhaps the deductible for ER visits needed to be raised. It was suggested that some kind of survey be undertaken to determine if students who have non-UC insurance are exhibiting similar behavior to those with UC students insurance.

As always we preserve recordings of the Regents since the Regents have no policy on how long they will retain their recordings. You can see the Health Services Committee meeting at:

https://ia801308.us.archive.org/9/items/health-services-committee_202402/Health%20Services%20Committee.mp4.

The general link for the website containing both the Health Services and the full board meetings is:

https://archive.org/details/health-services-committee_202402.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/02/watch-regents-full-board-meeting-of-feb.html>.

Is there a buried lede here?

Monday, February 26, 2024



The Daily Bruin carries a story about two students who had EMT training and were able to save another student having a seizure in the middle of a midterm exam. You can find it at:

<https://dailybruin.com/2024/02/24/from-chemical-formulas-to-911-two-student-emts-save-seizing-student-mid-exam>

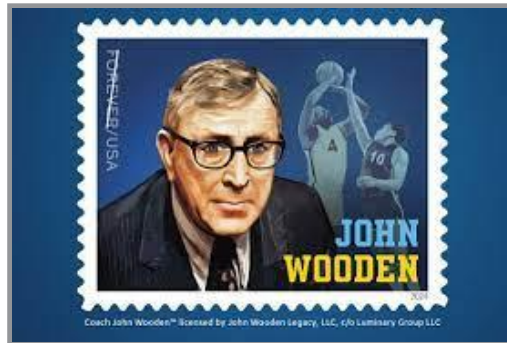
But when you read the full story, you find within it this segment:

... Despite calling 911 immediately, the paramedics took a while to arrive, he said, adding that he attributed this to them being unfamiliar with campus and therefore being unable to locate the building in a timely manner. "I thought this was (the paramedics were) going to come right away, but ... (they took) 10 to 15 minutes to arrive," [the course instructor] said. "I was shocked." ...

Seems like we have a problem.

Wooden Stamp

Tuesday, February 27, 2024



From the [LA Daily News](#): *One of Los Angeles' most beloved figures of the past century, and a giant of college sports, was honored Saturday with a stamp approval. A first-day-of-issue ceremony for a commemorative U.S. Postal Service Forever stamp depicting the late UCLA basketball coach John Wooden was held [last] Saturday outside Pauley Pavilion, where the legendary coach, mentor and leader enjoyed record-setting success.*

UCLA Chancellor Gene Block, NCAA and NBA legend Kareem Abdul-Jabbar —who played for Wooden's Bruins during three consecutive championship seasons — former Bruins' women's gymnastics coach Valorie Kondos Field, Christy Impelman, a granddaughter of Wooden, and Derek Kan, a member of the U.S. Postal Service Board of Governors, spoke at the early afternoon ceremony...

Full story at <https://www.dailynews.com/2024/02/24/coach-mentor-leader-stamp-celebrates-ucla-legend-john-wooden/>.

State Budget Gimmicks

Tuesday, February 27, 2024



As blog readers will know, the governor - as the state constitution requires - presented his budget proposal for 2024-25 in January. As always, he sounded very authoritative in his presentation. But there were a lot of loose ends that weren't apparent.

One of these loose ends is the budget treatment of K-14 under Prop 98 which is based on various formulas approved by voters. K-14 absorbs over 40% of the general fund budget so how it is handled affects other elements of the budget, especially the discretionary portion that includes UC.

Because of the delay in income tax receipts for 2022 taxes caused by federal and state temporary policies related to wildfires, it was difficult to estimate what revenues would be when the current budget was approved. As it turned out, revenues were significantly overestimated, leading to an overpayment to K-14. The governor was reluctant to take back funding that had already been allocated. But allowing K-14 to keep the overage would create greater K-14 liabilities going forward, so the governor proposed a gimmicky way around the Prop 98 rules. The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) has raised questions about this approach.*

How the legislature will eventually deal with the problem is unknown at this point. But indirectly, these Prop 98 pressures put an additional squeeze on UC, which is already slated for a "deferral" of payments that would be due this coming fiscal year under the "compact" with the governor.

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* <https://lao.ca.gov/reports/2024/4840/Governors-Prop-98-Funding-Maneuver-021524.pdf>; <https://lao.ca.gov/reports/2024/4839/Prop98-K12-Budget-021524.pdf>.

Remember "Medical" Marijuana?

Wednesday, February 28, 2024



You may recall that the approval by voters of "medical" marijuana led quickly to a de facto legalization of recreational marijuana. The original selling point was that a few cancer patients and others could benefit from doctor-prescribed marijuana, so why shouldn't it be allowed? But once it was allowed, it wasn't hard to obtain a prescription for any ailment, real, imagined, or totally made up.

What the US Supreme Court opened the door to NIL (name-image-likeness) payments to college athletes, the justices probably imagined that only a few star athletes would benefit. But once NIL was allowed, supposedly for stars, it became a general recruitment and retention tool, i.e., general pay-for-play. Now lower courts are recognizing - and apparently endorsing - general pay-for-play. From Inside Higher Ed:

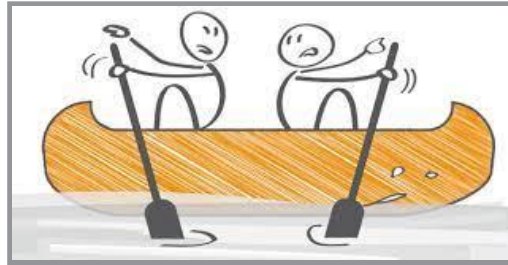
A federal judge issued a preliminary injunction siding with the states of Tennessee and Virginia in their lawsuit challenging the National Collegiate Athletic Association's enforcement of its rules restricting the use of name, image and likeness payments to recruit athletes... Judge Clifton L. Corker of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee issued a preliminary injunction barring the NCAA from enforcing its name, image and likeness policy, citing not its impact on institutions like the University of Tennessee but on athletes themselves.

"It is pure speculation to assume that student-athletes would receive more lucrative NIL deals in an open market. Fair-market value may be equal to or less than the NIL deals student-athletes can currently receive after selecting a school," Corker wrote. "But without the give and take of a free market, student-athletes simply have no knowledge of their true NIL value. It is this suppression of negotiating leverage and the consequential lack of knowledge that harms student-athletes."

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2024/02/26/judge-bars-ncaa-enforcing-its-rules-name-likeness>.

Regents vs. Senate

Wednesday, February 28, 2024



As blog readers will know, the Regents are in conflict with the Academic Senate regarding online degrees, after a vote on Feb. 14th.* This conflict is part of a longer trend involving other issues such as dropping use of the SAT. From Inside Higher Ed:

The University of California is ending a ban on allowing students to study for their degrees entirely through online courses. The UC Board of Regents voted 10 to 1 on Feb. 14 to repeal a year-old decision by the Academic Senate. That 2023 decision essentially banned online degrees from the university system, requiring anyone seeking an online degree to get an exception to that “campus experience” requirement.

The vote has raised issues about the balance of power between the regents and the Academic Senate. “It’s within the board’s authority to make a decision in the area of degree requirements, but the way it was carried out was damaging to shared governance,” said James Steintrager, chair of the Academic Senate.

Steintrager said there are no immediate plans to respond to the regents’ reversal, adding that the Senate does not have the power to override the decision. But, he said, there will be a response about the regents’ decision-making process. “I was taken aback in the way they did it, because they listened to the argument but had no meaningful Q&A,” he said, referring to the lack of questioning during his presentation at the meeting. “They seemed to have a willingness to act without being informed.” ...

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/tech-innovation/teaching-learning/2024/02/27/university-california-lifts-ban-online-degree>.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/02/watch-regents-full-board-meeting-of-feb.html>.

The Missing Link in Admissions

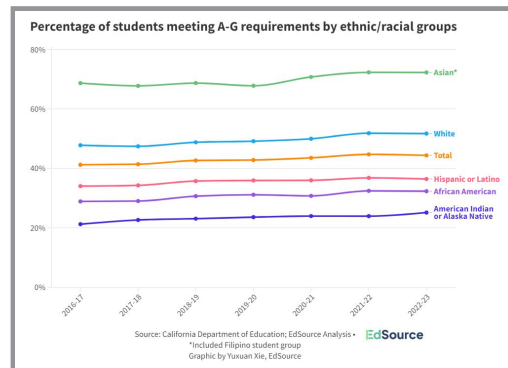
Thursday, February 29, 2024



Given all the noisy politics around what should be taught in K-12 about California's diverse population, or around the use of admissions tests such as the SAT, you might think that these issues are the key to making college more available to disadvantaged students.

However, in California, to apply to UC or CSU, students in high school need to complete the so-called A-G courses. A majority of students do not, either because the courses aren't offered or because they are unaware of the importance of taking the courses.

EdSource has a chart showing A-G completion rates in 2023:



Source: <https://edsources.org/2024/most-california-high-school-seniors-shut-out-of-even-applying-to-the-states-universities/705635>.

It appears, therefore, that the key to wider access is to get more high school students interested in taking A-G and being capable of completing A-G when they do. And, of course, A-G have to be offered and promoted by school districts.

Does this make you nervous?

Thursday, February 29, 2024



As blog readers will know, we have been following UC's bailout of the **Blackstone Real Estate Trust (BREIT)**. From the [Financial Times](#):

Blackstone owes the University of California twice as much as it did last quarter as part of a complex transaction to shore up its flagship real estate fund. The world's largest alternative asset manager promised UC an 11.25 per cent annual return from the property fund, called Blackstone Real Estate Income Trust, or Breit, as part of a deal to draw \$4.5bn in new investment. But as the fund lost value last year, Blackstone's liability to UC has grown to \$560mn.

It underscores the financial risk Blackstone assumed to draw UC's investment by promising high returns on property investments hit by rising interest rates. In late December 2022 and January 2023, Blackstone received a \$4.5bn investment from UC that helped Breit meet a spate of redemption requests from other investors and shore up its liquidity. The new cash helped Breit avert a fire sale to meet the requests. To entice UC, Blackstone made a promise that Breit would achieve 11.25 per cent annualised returns over six years. The US private capital group pledged \$1.1bn in Breit shares it owned to guarantee some of those returns. Since the UC investment, Breit's redemption requests have dropped by about 80 per cent.

But Blackstone has had to record a liability to UC based on how far Breit has fallen below its return promises. In the fourth quarter, Blackstone more than doubled its liability to UC, raising it from \$260mn at the end of the third quarter to \$560mn by the end of 2023, according to a securities filing. Breit recorded a 0.5 per cent loss in 2023, its first annual loss since its launch in 2017, putting Blackstone significantly behind on its promised return. Breit's value fell as Blackstone marked down some property investments. In addition, some interest rate hedges that had gained substantially in value lost ground amid rising expectations of interest rate cuts from the US Federal Reserve.

The annual losses in turn caused Blackstone's liability to UC to increase. Though it is an accounting entry and no cash or assets are changing hands, the liability reflects the increased risk Blackstone may eventually have to forfeit some Breit shares it owns to the California-based endowment. If Breit's performance soars in coming years, the liability could reverse or even turn into an asset...

Full story at <https://www.ft.com/content/c057a8ff-0a9b-418b-80b3-0e66055af95c>.

What could possibly go wrong?

Friday, March 01, 2024



From Inside Higher Ed: ... *For faculty members who hesitate—for any reason—to assume responsibility for minimizing distractions in the classroom, Chafic Bou-Saba, associate professor for computing technology and information systems at Guilford College, is working on a solution. Bou-Saba is designing a facial recognition system for classroom management. Multiple cameras spread throughout the room will take attendance, monitor whether students are paying attention and detect their emotional states, including whether they are bored, distracted or confused.*

“The use of the latest technology was the driving force behind this project,” Bou-Saba said of his research project. “The device will take the stress away [from the teacher] and will document student behavior, if needed, by taking five- to 10-second videos.” The instructor could then say, “Hey, here you are not looking, here you interacted with another student and here you are doing something else.” Bou-Saba hopes that, with training, the AI-powered software could also help detect how much the students are learning. He aims to test the system by the semester’s end...

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/tech-innovation/teaching-learning/2024/02/27/facial-recognition-heads-class-will-students>.

The meter is running...

Friday, March 01, 2024



...on People's Park:

UC Berkeley spent \$7.8 million to deploy its own forces to wall off and secure People's Park, the storied 2.8-acre green space that activists seized in the '60s to serve as a gathering space for nonconformists. That multimillion-dollar total is expected to grow substantially as outside police agencies submit their bills to the university. And the cost of keeping people out of the park continues to be high: The university pays nearly \$1 million a month to station private security guards outside the park, 24 hours a day...

Full story at <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-02-28/cost-uc-berkeley-peoples-park-seizure-millions-rising>.

This is NOT OK - Part 2

Saturday, March 02, 2024



Veksler

From ABC News: *The student body president at the University of California, Santa Barbara is calling out alleged antisemitism on campus after she says she was targeted in unauthorized signs displayed at the university's multicultural center.*

*Reports of antisemitism and Islamophobia have flooded universities across the U.S. amid rising tensions over the Israel-Hamas war, according to the U.S. Department of Education. Tessa Veksler, a fourth-year student at the university and student body president, shared photos of the signs, with several including her by name, and wrote, "I do not feel safe on campus," in an Instagram post Monday. The messages on the signs included "Tessa Veksler supports genocide," "Zionists not welcome" and "You can run but you can't hide Tessa Veksler," her post showed.**

*"How can Jewish students feel safe when they see a Jewish leader being explicitly targeted? This is dehumanizing and rooted in antisemitism," Veksler wrote on Instagram. "This incident is not an isolated event but rather a culmination of neglecting to adequately address the implications of such speech and actions within our university." UC Santa Barbara's Office of the Chancellor released a statement** to the campus community Monday, saying the messaging was in "violation of our principles of community and inclusion."*

"The signage has been removed and the campus is conducting a bias incident review based on potential discrimination related to protected categories that include religion, citizenship, and national or ethnic origin," the statement said. Veksler and the multicultural center have not responded to ABC News' request for comment...

Full story at <https://abcnews.go.com/amp/US/uc-santa-barbara-student-body-president-allegedly-targeted/story?id=107591529>.

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* https://www.instagram.com/p/C31UnNOR0aQ/?img_index=1.

** <https://chancellor.ucsb.edu/memos/2024-02-26-message-our-campus-community>:



Dear Members of Our Campus Community,

We are writing to provide an update about our efforts to improve climate and community on our campus. Since our “Principles of Community” memo on October 26, 2023,^{***} our campus has sought to deal with complex and difficult issues related to the ongoing violence in the Middle East. We appreciate the efforts of many of our faculty, students, and staff to fulfill our responsibility to educate, enlighten, and deal with disagreement with respect and sensitivity, despite some conflict and controversy.

We were distressed to learn of incidents over the weekend that included offensive social media messages and signage at the MultiCultural Center entrance. Campus offices are reviewing these unauthorized and unofficial messages. The signage has been removed and campus is conducting a bias incident review based on potential discrimination related to protected categories that include religion, citizenship, and national or ethnic origin. The posting of such messages is a violation of our principles of community and inclusion.

We call everyone’s attention to the new UC Presidential Policy on Anti-Discrimination, which was effective on February 20, 2024, and can be found online on the UCOP Policies webpage located here. The new policy covers Harassment, Discrimination and Retaliation by and against students, employees, and third parties on University property or in connection with University employment or programs or activities.

Prohibited Conduct under the Policy based on national or ethnic origin or ancestry extends to individuals who experience Discrimination or Harassment based on their actual or perceived shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics, or citizenship or residency in a country with a dominant religion or distinct religious identity. This includes, for example, antisemitic, anti-Arab, and Islamophobic Discrimination or Harassment. Some of these forms of Discrimination or Harassment may also represent Prohibited Conduct based on other Protected Categories covered by this Policy, including based on religion. The policy includes strong protections for freedom of speech and academic freedom.

We strive to create opportunities for civil dialogue, free from bullying and discrimination, that allow all community members to have their voices heard, and to have a space in which to respectfully express their views. To ensure that we uphold our community values and principles, the campus is committed to thoroughly reviewing and addressing all reported bias incidents.

UC President Drake has announced one-time funding to help UC campuses address and combat antisemitism, Islamophobia, and other forms of bias, bigotry, and discrimination at the University. The intention is to contribute to our mutual aim of safe, inclusive, and respectful environments at all campuses. Funding will address emergency mental health and trauma support for students, faculty, and staff; voluntary, extracurricular educational programming; and training and professional development for leaders, faculty, and staff. We are consulting widely about these programs and we will be in touch as plans are developed.

The Division of Student Affairs has posted reminders about campus rules and expectations for students, as well as campus safety and support resources. Faculty and staff with needs and concerns can contact the Academic & Staff Assistance Program, the Ombuds Office, or the University of California Ethics & Compliance Program. Information about reporting bias incidents can be found [here](#).

We hope for an end to the violence in the Middle East. We call upon all members of our community to treat each other with respect, care, and sensitivity. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Henry T. Yang, Chancellor

David Marshall, Executive Vice Chancellor

Margaret Klawunn, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

Jeffrey Stewart, Interim Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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*** <https://chancellor.ucsb.edu/memos/2023-10-26-principles-community>.

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Note: In a way, this episode is informative about the Regents' recent abortive debate about departmental political statements which focused on trying to define website "landing pages." In this case, the statement was on a door, not on the web at all. If whoever was in charge of the Center was aware of the door signage and didn't immediately remove it, it was or became a departmental political statement. The issue has nothing to do with defining webpages except for the fact that websites can be a platform for such statements. Statements are either appropriate to make or not, regardless of platform.

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There's more:

From the San Francisco Chronicle: *Hundreds of anti-Israel student protesters broke down the door of UC Berkeley's Zellerbach Playhouse on Monday night, smashing a window and preventing an Israeli speaker from addressing a few dozen Jewish students. Danielle Sobkin, one of the organizers who invited Israeli lawyer Ran Bar-Yoshafat, said the mob grabbed a sophomore who tried to attend the event, called him a "dirty Jew" and spit on him. She said that protesters also shoved a senior into the auditorium door as she tried to check in attendees, and that they grabbed a freshman by her neck.*

"This isn't an isolated incident. This is a continuous trend that's persisted my entire time on campus. Jewish hate. The targeting of Jewish students," said Sobkin, co-president of Bears for Israel, one of three Jewish groups that invited Bar-Yoshafat. "For a lot of us, this was the tipping point. The last straw," she said, noting that she's seen anti-Israel graffiti for years on campus, and said that for nearly two weeks, anti-Israel protesters have partially blocked the iconic Sather Gate broadcasting the sounds of war. Though she is a junior, Sobkin said she has enough credits to graduate this spring, "I've had all the Berkeley time I can handle."

*UC Berkeley spokesperson Dan Mogulof confirmed that about 200 student protesters mobbed Zellerbach, but could not substantiate injuries. He urged anyone who was hurt to report the incident to UC police and to the school's Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination. On Tuesday, Chancellor Carol Christ and Provost Benjamin Hermalin posted a message titled "Upholding Our Values" and expressing "deep remorse and sympathy to those students and members of the public who were in the building, fearing for their safety."**** The message called the incident an "attack on the fundamental values of the university" and said, "We cannot allow the use or threat of force to violate the First Amendment rights of a speaker, no matter how much we might disagree with their views." ...*

Full story at <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/uc-berkeley-talk-israeli-lawyer-halted-violent-18692073.php>.

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**** <https://news.berkeley.edu/2024/02/27/upholding-our-values>:

Chancellor Carol Christ and Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Benjamin Hermalin sent the following message to the Berkeley campus community Tuesday afternoon.

We write to you today with great sadness, concern, and dismay in the wake of an incident on our campus last night, an incident that violated not only our rules, but also some of our most fundamental values. Our purpose is not just to inform our community about what happened. We are writing with the hope that we can and will come together in defense of our Principles of Community that safeguard free speech, diversity of perspective and the ties that bind this community together.

Last night an event was scheduled featuring a speaker from Israel, who had been invited to campus by some of our student organizations. Minutes before the event was to start, a crowd of some 200 protesters began to surround the building. Doors were broken open and the protesters gained unauthorized entry to the building. The event was canceled, and the building was evacuated to protect the speaker and members of the audience.

We want to express our deep remorse and sympathy to those students and members of

the public who were in the building, fearing for their safety. Today, like last night, our colleagues in Student Affairs are reaching out with offers of support and we are urging students to report what they witnessed and experienced to UCPD and/or our Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination. We share your anger and concern, and we understand that we must do all that we can to prevent anything like this from happening again.

Due to safety concerns, we worked with the hosting organization to move the event to a different location, one that was believed to be more secure. We also stepped up security and sent a team of UCPD officers to the event. We approach events like this with two priorities: to do what we can so that the event can go forward, and to do what we can to safeguard student safety and well-being. Last night, despite our efforts and the ample number of police officers, it was not possible to do both given the size of the crowd and the threat of violence.

We are committed to responding to violations of our "Time, Place, and Manner" rules. We deeply respect the right to protest as intrinsic to the values of a democracy and an institution of higher education. Yet, we cannot ignore protest activity that interferes with the rights of others to hear and/or express perspectives of their choosing. We cannot allow the use or threat of force to violate the First Amendment rights of a speaker, no matter how much we might disagree with their views. We cannot allow the use or threat of force to imperil members of our community and deny them the ability to feel safe and welcome on our campus. We cannot cede our values to those willing to engage in transgressive behavior.

We will in the days ahead decide on the best possible path to fully understand what happened and why; to determine how we will address what occurred; and to do everything possible to preclude a repeat of what happened.

The attack on the building, and on the event, was an attack on the fundamental values of the university, which are also essential to maintain and nurture open inquiry and an inclusive civil society, the bedrock of a genuinely democratic nation. We are now, and will remain in the future, committed to Free Speech as essential to our educational mission, our institutional identity, and the strength of our community. We hope for your support as we seek to protect and preserve our Principles of Community.

Big Blue Bus Security

Sunday, March 03, 2024



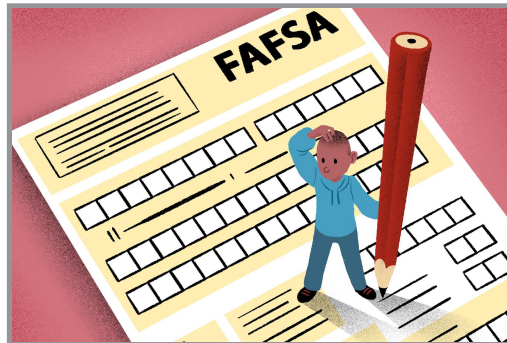
A number of the major routes of the Santa Monica Big Blue Bus terminate at UCLA. Apparently, increased security is being added. From the [Santa Monica Patch](#):

Security guards will be deployed on key Big Blue Bus routes and at bus stops beginning in March as part of an effort by the city to increase safety on public transit. The guards, called transit safety officers, will be stationed on "high traffic routes and at select bus stops, where they are most needed." The city hired Good Guard Security to supply security guards, who will be specially trained and will be deployed starting March 10, according to the city...

Full story at <https://patch.com/california/santamonica/security-guards-hired-big-blue-bus-santa-monica>.

The FAFSA Drama Continues

Sunday, March 03, 2024



The FAFSA drama continues. From [Inside Higher Ed](#):

Congress moved Thursday to fix an error in the legislation overhauling the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, days after the Education Department announced it was updating the formula for aid eligibility to comply with the law. The formula change would've made more students eligible for the Pell Grant, federal aid for low-income students—a move the Biden administration touted in a news release Tuesday. But Congress balked at the change, which was the result of an error in the initial legislation, and addressed the issue in the continuing resolution that passed Thursday to fund the government through March 22.

Vermont senator Bernie Sanders, the Independent who chairs the Senate education committee, said in a statement that 100,000 students would lose access as a result of the continuing resolution. That figure could be higher, based on department data that showed 7.3 million students were expected to be eligible for Pell Grants as a result of the formula change and other implementation efforts. The department had previously estimated that about 5.2 million students would qualify for the grant...

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2024/03/01/congress-passes-fafsa-formula-fix>.

Pre-Retirement Programs in March

Monday, March 04, 2024



Various online programs are available in March concerning UC's retirement plans. The schedule is below. (All times are Pacific.)

YOUR UC RETIREMENT SYSTEM

This class covers UC's primary retirement benefits that provide a foundation for retirement income, and voluntary retirement benefits that offer additional saving opportunities in UC's 403(b), 457(b) and DC plans.

Tuesday, March 5 9:00 a.m.

Wednesday, March 13 noon

Thursday, March 21 1:00 p.m.

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MANAGING MY MONEY (NEW)

Identify the three core components of a sound budget, begin to build (or rebuild) your emergency savings fund, and get control over prioritizing your debt.

Wednesday, March 6 9:00 a.m.

Tuesday, March 19 noon

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MAXIMIZE SOCIAL SECURITY IN YOUR RETIREMENT STRATEGY

This class can help you learn about Social Security, including ways to maximize benefits

under different scenarios and priorities (divorce, working, tax impact, other sources of retirement income, etc.). It also offers tools and resources available to help you look at different options and make the most of your benefit.

Thursday, March 7 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday, March 20 9:00 a.m.

Wednesday, March 27 noon

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RETIREMENT INCOME PLANNING FOR HER

Understand why retirement planning is different for women, identify the five key financial risks in retirement and learn the basics of creating a retirement income plan

Tuesday, March 12 1:00 p.m.

Tuesday, March 26 9:00 a.m.

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PRESERVING YOUR SAVINGS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

How an estate plan can help you preserve your assets and control the distribution of your estate. Covers wills and probate, power of attorney, healthcare proxies, and gifting and insurance replacement strategies.

Thursday, March 14 noon

Thursday, March 28 1:00 p.m.

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Registration for these programs is available at:

<https://uc-ftdchoiceretiree.cmail19.com/t/r-e-tidhlrk-ntybxyk-r/>.

And now for something complete different...

Monday, March 04, 2024



Near UCLA in Bel Air is the **Frederick R. Weisman Art Foundation**, specializing in modern art, 265 N Carolwood Dr, Los Angeles, CA 90077. If you have the time, you might want to visit. Information below:

Days : Monday through Friday

Time : 10:30 am and 1:30 pm

Advanced reservations are required.

Tel: (310) 277-5321

Fax: (310) 277-5075

Email: tours@weismanfoundation.org

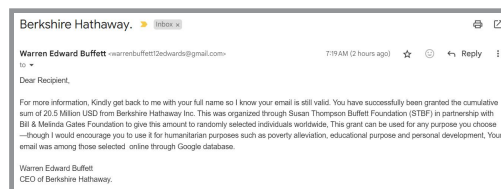
FREE TOURS ARE AVAILABLE BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

Call or email and wait for a confirmation.

<https://www.weismanfoundation.org/>.

If only my name was "Recipient"...

Monday, March 04, 2024



Just a reminder to make sure your "delete" key is working.

Players as Employees - Part 2

Tuesday, March 05, 2024



We have been tracking the various ways in which college sports - or at least some of them - are becoming more like professional (commercial) sports.* One of them is a recent National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) decision to recognize Dartmouth basketball players as employees - and thus eligible for federal protections to unionize. The decision does not affect UC campuses since the NLRB covers only the private sector. However, the California Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) could well be influenced by the NLRB precedent, since state law with regard to labor relations is similar to federal.

In any case, [Sportico](#) carries the latest on Dartmouth:

A day after Dartmouth College motioned NLRB regional director Laura Sacks to introduce new evidence to counter the men's basketball players' bid to become employees and unionize, Sacks denied the motion Friday. The denial to reopen the record makes it more likely the players will proceed with their scheduled March 5 vote on whether to unionize.

Reopening the record is considered an extraordinary measure under labor law, and if it had been granted, it would have delayed the proceedings. Dartmouth insists that Sacks, who on Feb. 5 found the basketball players to be employees within the meaning of the National Labor Relations Act and authorized a union vote, erred in reaching her decision. The school asserts Sacks misapplied the law and reached a conclusion based on an incomplete factual record.

Sacks disagrees, saying she wrote no extraordinary circumstances are present. Dartmouth wants to introduce "evidence which existed and was readily available to it prior to the hearing," Sacks noted. The school could have presented additional evidence during the four-day hearing held last October. While Dartmouth complains the NLRB has not previously recognized college players as employees, Sacks' contrary finding is not a reason to reopen the case.

Sacks also wrote Dartmouth's motion wasn't timely. It had 10 business days to file the motion following Feb. 5, but waited until 17 business days to do so.

Source: <https://www.sportico.com/law/analysis/2024/nlr-denies-dartmouth-motion-1234768854/>.

It should be noted that there are avenues of appeal to the basic decision which Dartmouth could well pursue.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/02/players-as-employees.html>.

Second Response of Berkeley Chancellor Christ to Cancelled Event of...

Tuesday, March 05, 2024



Responding to the events of Feb. 26

"What happened on Monday, Feb. 26 is unacceptable," leaders write.

By Public Affairs (UC-Berkeley)

March 4, 2024

Chancellor Carol Christ and Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Ben Hermalin sent the below message on Monday, March 4.

We write with an update about our response to last week's protest at an event featuring a speaker from Israel.

As we stated in last week's message, what happened on Monday, Feb. 26 is unacceptable. In the wake of protesters' efforts to shut down the event, a criminal investigation has been launched. We intend to gain a complete picture of what happened and hold accountable individuals or groups responsible for violations of the law and/or our policies.

After we sent last week's message, UCPD and OPHD received reports that two of the Jewish students who organized the event, as well as some of the attendees, were subjected to overtly antisemitic expression. UCPD is investigating these two alleged incidents, which also included allegations of physical battery, as hate crimes. They are also investigating other reports of illegal conduct, including one additional allegation of physical battery upon a student. One criminal suspect has been identified to date, for trespassing. Our Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination has also opened a separate discrimination investigation.

Interviews are being conducted and video evidence is being reviewed. We urge anyone who has information about crimes to contact UCPD.

We will now reevaluate and modify our security preparations in the current environment of heightened disagreement about issues that connect to the identities of many people in our campus communities.

This university has a long history of commitment to and support for nonviolent political protest that respects the First Amendment rights of others. That is not what occurred on Feb. 26. It was not peaceful civil disobedience. We condemn it in the strongest possible terms.

Nor can we turn a blind eye towards the hatred and stereotyping at the heart of all forms of bias and discrimination. While hateful expression may be protected by the Constitution, we still have a responsibility to respond by working to protect and support targeted communities and by marshaling the educational resources of the university to confront the ignorance at the heart of bias.

Political protest is about opposition to an idea, action or policy. Antisemitic expression is a frightening attack on an entire people. Every student, every member of our community, has a right to feel safe and welcome, and a true sense of belonging regardless of their identity or perspectives. All members of our community, no matter their political views, should feel safe on our campus. Our commitment to these values is nonnegotiable.

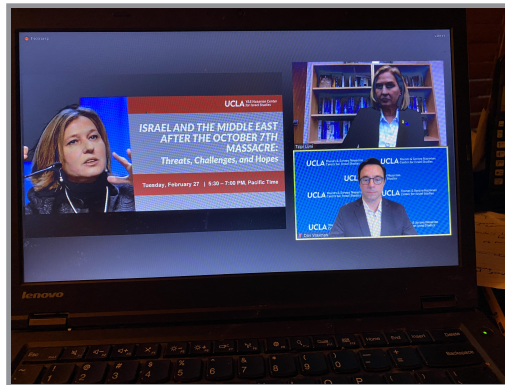
We continue to urge all community members to immediately report any harassment or discrimination to our Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination, and any alleged crimes or threats to the University of California Police Department. These reports are a necessary step to respond appropriately and quickly to behavior or expression that violates the law and/or our rules.

We are confident that the UC Berkeley community will rise to meet the opportunities and challenges we face.

Source: <https://news.berkeley.edu/2024/03/04/responding-to-the-events-of-feb-26>.

Non-event

Wednesday, March 06, 2024



A little over a week ago, February 27, at UCLA, the Nazarian Center for Israel Studies had scheduled an in-person event with a former Israeli official. When a protest demonstration was announced, the event was moved to another campus location.* However, that location became known and, after the violence at a similar event at Berkeley on February 26, it was decided to change the event from in-person to a Zoom webinar.

The webinar is now available on the Center's YouTube channel.**



Instagram post***

As a result of the preemptive switch to a webinar, you didn't hear about any Berkeley-type problems at UCLA on February 27th. On the other hand, an event that was supposed to be on campus was removed out of fear of possible violence and put online. An alternative option is always to provide sufficient security to avoid things getting out of hand.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/03/this-is-not-ok-part-2.html>.

** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SyFFAiowGa4>.

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https://www.instagram.com/p/C3ygNJSvTHe/?utm_source=ig_embed&utm_campaign=loading&img_index=2

Who knew...

Wednesday, March 06, 2024

there was oil in Syria?

Greetings!

My name is Mr. Faez Ashi Farah, Finance Director of Syrian Petroleum Company (SPC).

Due to the current political climate in Syria, I am seeking to invest in a new country. I am interested in finding a reliable partner who is experienced in managing investments in your country.

I am prepared to invest in any sector that you believe is viable. If you have any suggestions for potential investments, I would be grateful for your input.

I am confident that a mutually beneficial partnership can be established. Your prompt reply would be appreciated.

Kind regards,

Mr. Faez Ashi Farah
Finance Director (SPC)
Email: faezashi@gpc-syria.com

Luckily, there is a delete key here. Remember to use it. Often.

Third Response of Berkeley Chancellor Christ to Cancelled Event of ...

Wednesday, March 06, 2024



Our commitment to Principles of Community and peaceful protest

"A university environment is a place in which we should be able to safely discuss and debate the most difficult issues of our time without fear of repercussions," leaders write.

By Public Affairs, March 4, 2024

Chancellor Carol Christ and Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Ben Hermalin sent the below message on Monday, March 4.

We write to share our commitment to the First Amendment and the principles of free expression. We want to make it clear that we support the right of students and Registered Student Organizations (RSO) to freely express their viewpoints in a safe and peaceful manner that is compliant with our Time, Place, and Manner policies. We acknowledge that campus departments and RSOs have the right to host events and speakers regardless of content. We will do what we can to fiercely protect this right. We also want to clarify that protesting an event due to its political nature does not make the protest activity inherently antisemitic or Islamophobic. People should also keep in mind that the actions of a few within a movement or protest do not represent the perspectives or values of an entire community. Civil disobedience can coexist within an event even when some or a minority go too far. It is important to acknowledge that there is considerable diversity in political thought and viewpoints within communities. With our Principles of Community in mind, we must refrain from stereotyping, vilifying, or judging an entire community based on the actions of a few.

We also want to acknowledge that these are very difficult times for many members of our community. We mourn the loss of lives including over 1,200 killed on October 7 in Israel and over 30,000 lives in Gaza since that date. Many of you have personal connections to this region of the world, and some of our community members are actively grieving the loss of close family members and friends. We know that many of you are in deep pain about the conflict in this region.

We know that some members of our campus community do not feel safe or empowered to make reports of incidents to the University. If you would like to discuss your options in a confidential space, please visit the Ombuds Office for Students & Postdoctoral Appointees, Employee Assistance, or Student Legal Services for consultation.

A University environment is a place in which we should be able to safely discuss and debate the most difficult issues of our time without fear of repercussions. Even when we disagree, we can do so with mutual respect and civility, which includes the right to peaceful protest. We encourage listening, seeking to understand, and treating one another with dignity and grace. Words have meaning and signal our values. We acknowledge that our messages have a differential impact on our diverse communities. Now more than ever, we need to reject the push to further polarize or silence the voices that challenge us.

Source: <https://news.berkeley.edu/2024/03/04/our-commitment-to-principles-of-community-and-peaceful-protest>.

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Maybe next time avoid problems by providing adequate security to enforce campus rules.
Just a thought...

Doing the Math: BOARS vs. UCOP

Thursday, March 07, 2024



From EdSource: An influential committee of the UC Academic Senate weighed in again last month on the contentious issue of how much math high school students must take to qualify to attend a four-year California state university. It ruled that high school students taking an introductory data science course or AP Statistics cannot substitute it for Algebra II for admission to the University of California and California State University, starting in the fall of 2025. The Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools or BOARS reaffirmed its position by accepting the recommendations of a workgroup of math and statistics professors who examined the issue. That workgroup determined that none of these courses labeled as data science “even come close” to qualifying as a more advanced algebra course...

BOARS establishes policies on admissions, but a small office in the UC President’s Office, the High School Articulation Unit, vets tens of thousands of courses that developers and high school teachers submit for approval. Starting in 2014, the unit began authorizing AP statistics and new data science courses as “validating” or satisfying Algebra II or Integrated Math III content requirements. That meant they either built on the content standards that students had covered or would cover in the course...

UC academic committee meetings, including BOARS, are closed to the public. But minutes from the July 2023 meeting indicated that some faculty members were dismayed that the articulation office had validated so many data science courses without their knowledge. “At least one member repeatedly suggested that UCOP has misinterpreted/misapplied the advanced math standard for years — and absent correction, will continue to do so — and so review of all current courses potentially implicated is needed,” the minutes state...

Full story at <https://edsource.org/2024/uc-confirms-data-science-cant-sub-for-algebra-ii-unresolved-what-can-it-qualify-for/707043>.

Phishing Ahead

Thursday, March 07, 2024



We have been featuring email frauds this week. There will be more of them in the future, according to the [Wall St. Journal](#):

... Just as some office workers use ChatGPT to write better emails, hackers are using manipulated versions of AI chatbots to turbocharge their phishing emails. They can use chatbots—some also freely-available on the open internet—to create fake websites, write malware and tailor messages to better impersonate executives and other trusted entities.

Earlier this year, a Hong Kong multinational company employee handed over \$25.5 million to an attacker who posed as the company's chief financial officer on an AI-generated deepfake conference call, the South China Morning Post reported, citing Hong Kong police. Chief information officers and cybersecurity leaders, already accustomed to a growing spate of cyberattacks, say they are on high alert for an uptick in more sophisticated phishing emails and deepfakes... Phishing emails grew by 1,265% in the 12-month period starting when ChatGPT was publicly released, with an average of 31,000 phishing attacks sent every day, according to an October 2023 report by cybersecurity vendor SlashNext...

Full story at <https://www.wsj.com/articles/welcome-to-the-era-of-badgpts-a104afa8>.

Follow on to Events of Feb. 26 at Berkeley

Thursday, March 07, 2024



From [Inside Higher Ed](#) today: *The Education Department is investigating allegations of shared-ancestry discrimination at another five colleges and universities, including the University of California, Berkeley, according to the agency's updated list of open inquiries.*

The department's list of colleges, universities and K-12 school districts under investigation doesn't specify what the investigation is about beyond a possible violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which requires federally funded institutions to protect students from discrimination based on race, color or national origin...

*The Jewish Telegraphic Agency reported that the Berkeley investigation stems from a Feb. 26 incident in which protesters disrupted a planned lecture from Ran Bar-Yoshafat, deputy director of the Kohelet Policy Forum, an Israeli libertarian think tank. The event was canceled and evacuated. The department's Office for Civil Rights typically takes at least a few weeks or months to open an investigation, so the quick turnaround on this incident is a shift. The Jewish Telegraphic Agency reported that the Berkeley investigation stems from a Feb. 26 incident in which protesters disrupted a planned lecture from Ran Bar-Yoshafat, deputy director of the Kohelet Policy Forum, an Israeli libertarian think tank. The event was canceled and evacuated. **The department's Office for Civil Rights typically takes at least a few weeks or months to open an investigation, so the quick turnaround on this incident is a shift...***

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2024/03/07/us-opens-civil-rights-probes-uc-berkeley-four-others>.

This may be a tough sell

Friday, March 08, 2024



UC and the Academic Senate are officially opposing a state constitutional amendment that would put UC employees under the same labor standards as other employees. In a letter to Liz Ortega, Chair, California Assembly Committee on Labor and Employment, UC Academic Council Chair James Steintrager argues that:

... Under ACA 14, UC faculty and student trainees would lose the necessary flexibility to efficiently and appropriately allocate our work time. This, in turn, will have a negative impact on the University's research productivity and teaching excellence. The proposed legislation, impairing how faculty organize their own time and labor, would strike at the heart of UC's missions and at the entire faculty's academic freedom insofar as it will impede our ability to deliver our best work in service to the state...

Full letter at https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/_files/reports/aca14-oppose-20240305.pdf.

The proposed amendment states:

... Employees of the Regents of the University of California shall have the right to, and shall be covered by, the following basic state labor standards as they apply to employees of the state on or after January 1, 2025:

(A) Equal pay standards, including those established pursuant to the California Equal Pay Act and California Fair Pay Act of 2015.

(B) The payment of a minimum wage.

(C) The timely payment of wages.

(D) The payment of overtime and standards governing the hours of work.

(E) Occupational safety and health standards.

(F) Meal and rest breaks.

(G) Paid leave, including paid sick leave.

(H) Standards against displacement and contracting out of work as provided for in state laws governing the nonemergency use of personal service contracts by the state...

Full text of proposed ACA 14 at <https://legiscan.com/CA/text/ACA14/id/2840897>.

Exactly how faculty in particular would be affected by ACA 14 is not clear from Chair Steintrager's letter. The concept that UC employees should be exempt from general labor standards may be a **tough sell** in the legislature.

Players as Employees - Part 3

Friday, March 08, 2024



We have been following the gradual professionalization and commercialization of college sports, most recently at Dartmouth where basketball players petitioned the NLRB for a union representation election.* Despite objections from Dartmouth, the elections was held. From the NY Times:

Members of the Dartmouth College men's basketball team congregated at the stately Hanover Inn near campus on a dreary, drizzly Tuesday and walked over to a small office building where they smiled for a group photo. Then they went up to a second-floor conference room and took a vote that had been six months — or rather, many years — in the making. When the yellow sheets of paper were tallied and certified about an hour later, the basketball players had accomplished something no other college athletes had done.

By a 13-2 vote, they had formed a union.

"It's definitely becoming more real," Cade Haskins, a junior on the basketball team and a leader of the effort, said to about a dozen reporters after the vote. "We know this could potentially be making history. That wasn't the reason we were doing it, but to do that can be scary and daunting."

Haskins expressed hope that his peers across the Ivy League and the rest of the country would soon be recognized as employees under federal labor law — a classification that has been a red line for college sports leaders who would be forced to share revenue directly with athletes...

Full story at <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/05/us/dartmouth-basketball-union-athletes-employees.html>.

As we have previously noted, UC is not covered by the NLRB. But it is covered by a statute which is similar in many ways to that covering the private sector and the state's PERB could look at the Dartmouth example as a precedent.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/03/players-as-employees-part-2.html>.

Does this make you nervous - Part 2

Saturday, March 09, 2024



We have been tracking the Blackstone Real Estate Investment Trust (BREIT) since UC's \$4.5 billion bailout as BREIT experience a slow-motion run. In the most recent month, although investors who pulled their money out for the first time got all they requested, it is worth noting two things.

1) Gradually, those who wanted to get out eventually have been able to do so, even though the pace of withdrawal was rationed by BREIT. So perhaps it is not surprising that the rationing has ceased, despite the ongoing drain.

2) As noted in our post last month, the extra return promised to UC has in effect been put on a tab, rather than paid outright.* So the payouts to those exiting has been partly funded by delaying cash payments to UC. From Globest:

... Blackstone Real Estate Income Trust (BREIT) fund finally delivered full liquidity to investors who requested redemptions in February. After more than a year of proration, BREIT reported in a March 1 letter to shareholders that it fulfilled 100% of the redemption requests it received last month. "We are pleased to report that BREIT fulfilled 100% of repurchase requests in February," the letter said. "BREIT was designed with a semi-liquid structure, trading a measure of liquidity for the potential for higher net returns. We could not be more proud that this structure has worked as intended to both prevent a liquidity mismatch and maximize long-term shareholder value."

BREIT's letter said it received \$961M in repurchase requests last month, which was below the fund's 2% of net asset value monthly limit and 26% lower than the \$1.3B in requests it received in January...

Full story at <https://www.globest.com/2024/03/04/blackstone-fulfills-all-redemption-requests/>.

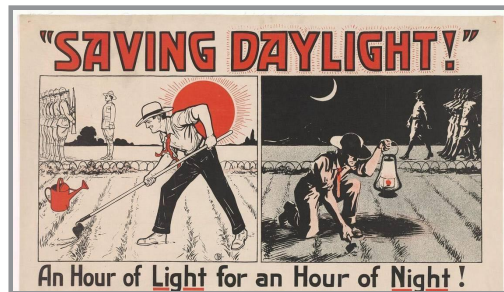
As we have been stating all along, the issue is less whether in the long run UC's investment pays off but rather the Regents' approval of the deal without raising risk/return questions. Only one Regent raised the issue. The others were mainly concerned - to the extent they were - by charges that BREIT wasn't being a good landlord, a separate issue.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/02/does-this-make-you-nervous.html>.

Coming Tomorrow

Saturday, March 09, 2024



"Spring Forward" comes tomorrow. If you have some dim memory of voting for some ballot measure that was supposed to stop the clock changing, we present our 2022 lecture (masks were still required) about why we still change the clocks despite the vote, and other timely matters, at:

<https://archive.org/details/mitchell-time-edited>.

Preliminary Regents' Agenda: March 20-21, 2024

Saturday, March 09, 2024



Note: The original schedule was for a three-day meeting, March 19-21. March 19 has been removed, probably by shifting the Investments Committee to the afternoon of March 21.

Agenda: March 20-21, 2024 at the UCLA Luskin Conference Center

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

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8:30 am **Board** (open session - includes public comment session)

- **Public Comment Period (30 minutes)**
- Remarks of the Chair of the Board
- Remarks of the President of the University
- Remarks of the Chair of the Academic Senate

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Concurrent Meetings:

9:30 am **Compliance and Audit Committee** (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of November 15, 2023

C1 Action: Appointment of Regents' External Auditor

C2 Discussion: Results of Internal Audit Quality Assessment Review

Upon end of open session:

Compliance and Audit Committee (closed session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of January 24, 2024

C3(X) Action: University of California Digital Risk Appetite Statement

[Note: "Risk appetite is the amount of risk, on a broad level, an entity is willing to accept in pursuit of value." Source: <https://www.ucop.edu/enterprise-risk-and-resilience/erm/tools-templates/risk-assessment-toolbox-content/uc-risk-appetite-definition-and-assessment-of-risks-uc-radar.html>]

C4(X) Discussion: Digital Risk Update

C5(X) Discussion: Review of Recent Cybersecurity Incidents

C6(X) Action: Recommended Settlements for Board Action

[Various settlements including one involving departure of UC-Berkeley from Pac-12]

C7(X) Discussion: Appellate, Trial Court Developments and Updates

[Various developments including dismissal of a challenge to DEI hiring statements]*

C8(X) Information Settlements and Separation Agreements under Delegated Authority Reported from December 1, 2023 to January 31, 2024

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9:30 am **Public Engagement and Development Committee** (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of January 24, 2024

P1 Discussion: Update from the Interim Senior Vice President of External Relations and Communications

P2 Discussion: Demystifying AI and Its Impacts in Higher Education

P3 Discussion: The **UCLA** BruinHubs: Bridging Basic Needs, Well-Being, and Community in One Place

[Note: The BruinHubs are on-campus spaces designed to meet the needs of students who commute long distances to campus. We have two locations located at the John Wooden Center and Strathmore Building. The BruinHub spaces were designed in recognition of commuters' routines and needs. Source: <https://campuslife.ucla.edu/bruinhub>]

P4 Discussion: UC Impact: A New Digital Resource

[Unclear what this item refers to: Possibly: <https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/new-university-california-website-shows-impact-of-10-campus-system>]

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1:00 pm **Governance Committee** (closed session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of January 24, 2024

G1(X) Discussion: Collective Bargaining Matters

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1:30 pm Joint Meeting of the **Academic and Student Affairs Committee & Compliance and Audit Committee** (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of January 24-25, 2024

J1 Action: Adoption of Regents Policy on the Use of University Administrative Websites

[*Note: As blog readers will know, this item - really about departmental political statements - was continued from the last Regents meeting. Whether the Regents will again become hung up on such esoterica as trying to define a website "landing page" or will focus on whether entire departments (as opposed to individuals), as UC entities, should make political statements is unknown. Possibly, a draft resolution of whatever is being proposed will be released before the meeting.*]

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2:10 pm **Finance and Capital Strategies Committee** (closed session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of November 15, 2023 and the Joint Meeting of the Health Services Committee and the Finance and Capital Strategies Committee of January 24, 2024

F1(X)2 Action: Life Science Building and Associated Improvements, Los Angeles Campus: Acquisition

[*Note: Unclear if this item refers to the \$700 million acquisition of the Westside Pavillion or yet another real estate purchase by UCLA*]

Upon end of closed session:

Finance and Capital Strategies Committee (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of January 24, 2024

F22 Action: Stair Tower and Exit Corridor Upgrades, UC Davis Health, Sacramento Campus: Amendment of the Budget, Hospital Seismic Upgrade

F3 Action: East Campus Loop Road, San Diego Campus: Budget, Scope, External Financing, and Design Following Consideration of Addendum No. 10 to the 2018 Long Range Development Plan Environmental Impact Report, Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act

F4 Action: Classroom and Office Building III, Merced Campus: Preliminary Plans Funding

F5 Action: Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Facility, Riverside Campus: Budget, Scope, External Financing, and Design Following Consideration of an Addendum to the 2021 Long Range Development Plan Environmental Impact Report Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act

F6 Information: Mid-Year Report of the UC Office of the President's Budget to Actual Expenditures and Second Quarter Forecast for Fiscal Year 2023-24

F7 Discussion: Significant Information Technology Projects Report for the Period September 1, 2023, Through December 31, 2023

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2:10 pm **Academic and Student Affairs Committee** (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of January 24, 2024

A1 Discussion: **Mathematics Preparation for UC Admission** – Past, Present, and Future

[*Note: This item may refer to the controversy regarding substitution of "data science" for a more traditional math course. See: <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/03/doing-math-boars-vs-ucop.html>*]

A2 Action: Approval of Multi-Year Plans for Professional Degree Supplemental Tuition for Six Graduate Professional Degree Programs

A3 Discussion: **Astronomy** at the University of California

[*Presumably, there will be at least some mention of the stalled Hawaiian Thirty-Meter Telescope (TMT) project in which UC is involved and which blog readers will be familiar. See: <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/02/checking-in-on-ever-contentious-tmt.html> (and many other blog postings)*]

A4 Discussion: Innovation and Entrepreneurship Update

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Thursday, March 21, 2024

8:30 am **Board** (open session - includes public comment session)

Public Comment Period (30 minutes)

Approval of the Minutes of the Meetings of January 24, 25, and February 14, 2024

Remarks from Student Associations

B1 Discussion: Advances in **CRISPR** Technology

[*Note: As blog readers will know, there have been prolonged patent litigation battles concerning CRISPR intellectual property and UC. See: <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2022/03/patent-loss.html> and many other blog postings*]

9:45 am **Board** (closed session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meetings of January 25 and February 14, 2024

B2(X) Discussion: **Incidents of Concern**

[*Note: "Incidents of Concern" most likely refers to incidents such as recently at Berkeley and Santa Barbara related to the Israel-Gaza War. The rationale for discussion behind closed doors is "litigation."*]

Committee Reports Including Approval of Recommendations from Committees

[*Note: The reports and approvals refer to various committee closed-door activities.*]

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10:30 am **Board** (open session)

Committee Reports Including Approvals of Recommendations from Committees:

- Academic and Student Affairs Committee
- Compliance and Audit Committee
- Finance and Capital Strategies Committee
- Health Services Committee (meeting of February 14, 2024)
- Public Engagement and Development Committee
- Joint Meeting: Academic and Student Affairs Committee and Compliance and Audit Committee

B3 Discussion: University of California Basic Needs Annual Report, 2022–23

B4 Discussion: Annual Report on Sustainability Practices

Officers' and President's Reports:

- Report of Interim, Concurrence, and Committee Actions
- Report of Materials Mailed Between Meetings

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1:00 pm **Investments Committee** (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of November 16, 2023

I1 Discussion: Review of Performance for the Second Quarter of Fiscal Year 2023–2024 of UC Pension, Endowment, Blue and Gold Pool, Working Capital, and Retirement Savings

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*See <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/01/dei-lawsuit-against-uc-dismissed-on.html>. The Haltigan case was dismissed without a ruling on the merits. Haltigan said he did not apply for a position at UC because of the required statement. The judge in the case ruled that Haltigan didn't have standing to sue because he had never applied.

UCLA Undergraduate Enrollment Data

Sunday, March 10, 2024

	2013	2023
Enrollees	5,697 100%	6,585 100%
African American	243 4%	462 7%
American Indian	31 1%	72 1%
Asian	1,937 34%	2,344 36%
Hispanic/Latino(a)	1,104 19%	1,517 23%
Pacific Islander	10 0%	35 1%
White	1,516 27%	1,484 23%
Unknown	206 4%	218 3%
International	650 11%	453 7%

Click on table to clarify.

Data are now available for undergraduate applicants, admits, and enrollees at UCLA (and the other campuses from UCOP at:

<https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/about-us/information-center/admissions-residency-and-ethnicity>.

The table above for UCLA was made from that source. Ninety-eight percent of enrollees to UCLA identified as either woman or man with a striking 63% as the former. The rest were nonbinary, trans, or not identified.

Everything in its place

Sunday, March 10, 2024



From the Bruin: *The UCLA Downtown Programming Committee chose 31 programs to initially house in the Trust Building, including the Center for Justice and UCLA Prison Education Program, the DTLA Community Media Lab, the UCLA Skid Row Partnership, and the Sustainable LA Grand Challenge. Chancellor Gene Block and Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Darnell Hunt said in a campuswide email...*

The email also announced the appointment of Dr. Owen Witte – a University professor of microbiology, immunology and molecular genetics – as special advisor to the EVCP for immunology initiatives at the [\$700 million] UCLA Research Park. The park will host the California Institute for Immunology and Immunotherapy at UCLA and the UCLA Center for Quantum Science and Engineering...

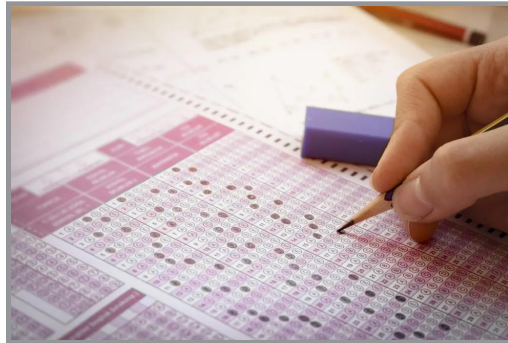
The implementation committee for UCLA South Bay in Ranchos Palos Verdes also met for its inaugural meeting in January, according to the email. The committee aims to support academic offerings related to sustainability, environmental justice and climate change, according to the email...

Source: <https://dailybruin.com/2024/03/07/ucla-downtown-confirms-31-programs-ucla-research-park-appoints-immunology-advisor>.

Would it be unkind to read between the lines and say that the \$80 million Palos Verdes property is inaccessible and we really don't know what to do with it? Just a question...

The SAT Again - Part 3

Monday, March 11, 2024



From Bloomberg: *Brown University is again requiring the SAT or ACT for admission, becoming the third Ivy League college this year to announce a return to standardized testing following a pause caused by the pandemic.*

The change will start with next year's application cycle, the school said Tuesday in a statement.

"After months of committee analysis and deliberation, Brown's president accepted the recommendations of a group charged to examine whether Brown's admissions practices align with its commitments to excellence, access and diversity," the school said.

Since the Supreme Court ruling last June that said colleges can't use race in admissions, admissions offices have been trying to figure out the best ways to recruit students. Dartmouth and Yale both said having a test score can give admissions officers more context about an applicant to determine if they can succeed at their schools...

Only a handful of elite schools have so far returned to testing. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology announced two years ago it would require the tests.

Only 5% of more than 1,000 members of the Common Application, the nonprofit that allows students to apply to multiple schools with the same form, are requiring the test in 2023-2024. That compared with 55% in 2019 before the pandemic...

Full story at <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-03-05/brown-university-becomes-third-ivy-to-reinstate-sat-requirements>.

The Way We Live Now (at Berkeley)

Monday, March 11, 2024



From CBS News: Starting [last] week, a team of private security guards will patrol the south side of the University of California Berkeley campus. They were hired by a group of concerned parents. The guards will work from 6:30 at night to 3 a.m., focusing on patrolling three main dorm buildings and the surrounding area. Cal parents who are part of a group called Safe Bears say this is long overdue but some wonder if it will really make the streets safer...

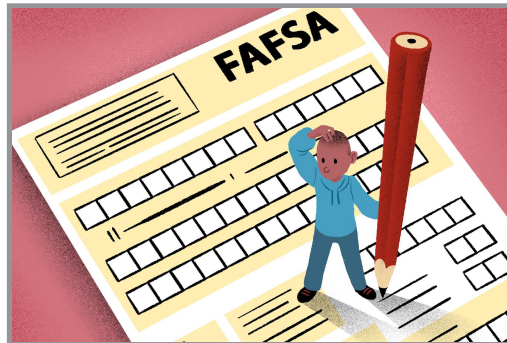
Safe Bears raised \$40,000 to pay for the security guards. Some patrol on foot around the dorms and others are on bikes to cover a wider area. The pilot program though will only last until March 23. After that, the hope is that the university will take over...

UC Berkeley in a statement wrote that the university is taking action to increase campus safety by adding more surveillance cameras and adding community service officers which are students trained by UCPD. It's also looking to hire more sworn police officers. Cal says training and experience are concerns when it comes to hiring private security. These guards though are only equipped with radios to report crimes...

Full story at <https://www.cbsnews.com/sanfrancisco/news/parents-uc-berkeley-private-security-patrol-campus/>.

The FAFSA Drama Continues - Part 2

Tuesday, March 12, 2024



We're still waiting for some heads to roll in DC. Hasn't happened yet. From Higher Ed Dive:

Roughly 1.1 million high school seniors submitted a Free Application for Federal Student Aid through late February, down 38% compared to the same time last year, according to a recent analysis from the National College Attainment Network.

About 26.4% of the class of 2024 submitted the FAFSA through Feb. 23. But an even lower share of students attending low-income public high schools, 22.5%, sent in the form by that date. About 47.1% fewer seniors at these high schools submitted the form by late February compared to the last cycle.

The dropping submissions rates come after the U.S. Department of Education made the FAFSA available about three months later than usual in order to streamline the form...

Full story at <https://www.highereddive.com/news/fafsa-submissions-down-high-school-seniors/709686/>.

Did anything happen last Saturday?

Tuesday, March 12, 2024



The item below appeared in the [Daily Cal](#) dated March 8 and references something happening that afternoon. Yours truly couldn't find any such thing happening.

UC issues revised anti-discrimination policy

Ria Raniwala, Mar 8, 2024, [Daily Cal](#)

This afternoon, the UC Office of the President released a statement issuing a revised anti-discrimination policy applying to employees, students and third parties involved at all UC campuses.

The policy, effective as of Feb. 20, provides new guidelines for university procedures in response to harassment and discrimination allegations based on protected categories. It mandates UC responsible employees (encompassing all UC employees who are not confidential resources) to notify the Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination promptly after any reported incident.

"The Anti-Discrimination policy provides a strong foundation to UC Berkeley's commitment to fostering a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive University campus, while recognizing the protection of free speech under the law," said representatives of UC Berkeley's Chancellor's office in a press release to all campus emails.

This policy works within the framework of the UC-wide Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy, which is also supported by the newly established UC Office of Civil Rights. These initiatives will work in tandem to provide leadership and support on protecting civil rights across all UC campuses, affiliates and the UC Office of the President.

Source: https://www.dailycal.org/news/uc/uc-issues-revised-anti-discrimination-policy/article_9ca1c18c-ddc3-11ee-a9a2-83cb08d86a08.html.

So, did anything happen with regard to the Feb. 20 anti-discrimination rules on March 8?*

Some revision or clarification?

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*The Feb. 20 rules are at: <https://policy.ucop.edu/doc/1001004/Anti-Discrimination>.

Upcoming Retirement Benefit Changes

Wednesday, March 13, 2024



Because of changes in life expectancy, there will be changes for those retiring this coming July 1 and later in lump-sum cashouts and adjustments for contingent annuitants (typically spouses who receive benefits after the death of the retiree). If people live longer, the value of their stream of benefits increases. So the lump sum will go up. And the decrease in the monthly benefit of the retiree to pay for the contingent recipient will also go up, i.e., the monthly benefit of the retiree will go down.

Note: Retirees should think long and hard before selecting the lump-sum cashout, a choice which, among other things, means they will not receive retiree health insurance.

From UCnet: *At the July 2023 meeting of the University of California Board of Regents, the Regents approved changes to actuarial assumptions that could impact the future UC Retirement Plan (UCRP) benefits of certain employees, depending on their retirement date and options selected. These changes will not impact the retirement benefits of current retirees. While the Regents approved maintaining the current investment return assumption (e.g., discount rate) at 6.75%, there were modifications to the mortality assumption based on the findings that UCRP members and beneficiaries are continuing to live longer. These changes, informed by an experience study conducted by UCRP's actuary, will go into effect on July 1, 2024.*

These changes will not impact the calculation of Basic Retirement Income. However, for retirements on or after July 1, 2024, changes will be implemented in the calculations of the UCRP lump sum cashout and UCRP monthly retirement income for members and contingent annuitants... Generally, there will be decreases at many common retirement ages for the member and contingent annuitant. This will lead to lower benefits payable under these options for retirements on or after July 1, 2024...

Full news release at <https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/2024/03/factors-used-to-calculate-ucrp-payment-options-will-change-on-july-1-2024.html>.

Berkeley Title VI Investigation

Wednesday, March 13, 2024



From the San Francisco Chronicle: *The U.S. Department of Education is investigating UC Berkeley for possible discrimination tied to the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas.*

Since Hamas' surprise attack against Israel on Oct. 7, education officials have announced investigations into dozens of colleges and universities, including Stanford, UCLA and UC San Diego. The department investigates allegations of discrimination based on ethnicity or shared ancestry at schools under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

It was unclear what prompted Berkeley to be added last week to the department's probe into campus discrimination. The agency did not respond to requests for comment.

The Times of Israel reported that the investigation stemmed from a Feb. 26 "anti-Israel" campus protest that "forced the cancellation" of a planned lecture by Israeli attorney and former Israeli Defense Force member Ran Bar-Yoshafat.

UC Berkeley Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Ben Hermalin did not address the protests but said in a March 4 statement that campus groups "have the right to host events and speakers regardless of content. We will do what we can to fiercely protect this right."

"We also want to clarify that protesting an event due to its political nature does not make the protest activity inherently antisemitic or Islamophobic," Hermalin said.

A Jewish student group said it planned to protest the university's response at noon Monday. In a statement announcing the protest, Hannah Schlacter, a student at Haas School of Business, said the administration has failed to adequately protect Jewish students "even in the midst of a hate crime investigation, a Title VI investigation, and a university-led investigation." ...

Full story at <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/uc-berkeley-investigation-18804260.php>.

I'll let you know...

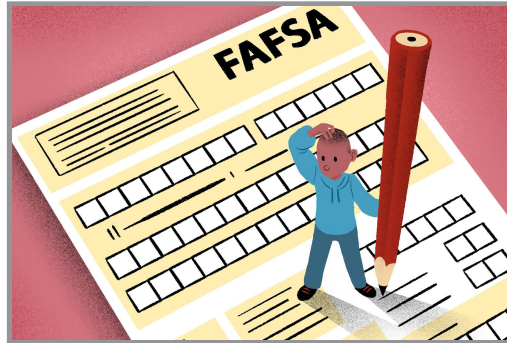
Wednesday, March 13, 2024



later today or tomorrow after I attend today's quarterly UCLA Anderson Forecast, but don't expect the UCLA forecasters to change their past outlook drastically. A more likely story is some slowing down, but not a recession, both at the national level and California.

The FAFSA Drama Continues - Part 3

Thursday, March 14, 2024



From the LA Times: *After months of delays and technical hiccups, some colleges and universities have started to receive federal data they need to put together financial aid offers for incoming students, the Biden administration said Monday. The Education Department says it sent a first batch of student records to a few dozen universities on Sunday and is making final updates before expanding to more universities.*

The delay has cut into the time schools usually have to assemble financial aid packages before the typical May 1 deadline for students to commit to a university. Many colleges have extended enrollment deadlines as they wait on the federal government, leaving families across the nation wondering how much financial help they will get with college tuition.

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid overhaul delayed the form's usual rollout from October to late December. The department then soft-launched the new version to address lingering bugs in the system, but many families reported difficulties accessing the form...

Full story at <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2024-03-12/education-department-starts-sending-financial-aid-data-to-colleges-after-months-of-delays>.

The People's Park Saga Continues

Thursday, March 14, 2024



From the East Bay Times: *More than a year after a lower court ruled the [People's Park student housing] project's Environmental Impact Report was inadequate, California's highest court announced Tuesday they will hear arguments in Los Angeles on April 3. This is the first news development since the state Supreme Court agreed to hear the case last May.*

UC Berkeley's proposal for that land includes housing for 1,100 university students and 125 homeless residents within two 12- and six-story dorm buildings — coming full circle since 1969, when the university's initial desire to build housing on the 2.8-acre site culminated in thousands of protesters, leading to a state of emergency and one death.

Attorneys for Cal asked the California Supreme Court in February 2023 to hear the case, after a state appellate court ruled that UC must either "fix the errors" in its California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents or ask the state Supreme Court to intervene. The university's appeal was backed by the city of Berkeley and state officials, including Gov. Gavin Newsom...

Full story at <https://www.eastbaytimes.com/2024/03/12/peoples-park-california-supreme-court-schedules-arguments-on-controversial-uc-berkeley-development-next-month/>.

The Forecast

Thursday, March 14, 2024



From the official news release: *The UCLA Anderson Forecast ended 2023 ringing an up note as its December forecast asserted that the long, lingering possibility of a recession had faded because of expansionary fiscal policy, new national industrial policy and a national consumer base that continued to spend, despite the perception of economic uncertainty. The first forecast of 2024 continues these themes, while also noting that the recurring threats of a government shutdown are short-lived and no longer sounding any serious alarms, and the strong second half of 2023 will carry into the new year.*

While it's true that January 2024 retail sales housing starts were down, the cause looks to be severe weather experienced in the eastern United States and not pullback by consumers or builders. Hiring remained strong in January and February and, though core inflation is coming down slowly, the forecast does not expect the Federal Reserve to decrease the Fed Funds rate until later in the year.

In California, the state's GDP grew at a 3.8% compound annual rate from the first to the third quarter of 2023 (the latest data available), faster than the U.S. and all but three large states: Washington, Florida and Texas. Like California, Washington's growth was driven by tech and aerospace, while part of the superior growth in Texas and Florida is attributed to in-migration, with more people moving to those states and working, rather than productivity and income gains. (In both of those states, construction of housing for new residents, and in Florida reconstruction of hurricane-devastated areas, contributed to their growth rates.) With a loss in population in California, per capita income growth continues to rival similar large states across the country. While there are still challenges ahead — notably, state and local government finance, homelessness and out-migration — the forces driving California's economy remain robust.

The national forecast

At least one thing is clear regarding recent activity in the U.S. economy: In spite of — or because of — feeling uncertain about the future, Americans went shopping in a big way over the holidays. In December, the Forecast predicted gross domestic product growth in the fourth quarter of 2023 to be 1.7%. It ended up coming in at a much higher 3.2% annual rate of growth. That was owing, in part, to strong consumer spending, but also to inventory replacement after the holidays. The forecast now expects less inventory adjustment in the current quarter and a moderation of consumer spending growth. As a result, the GDP growth forecast for the first quarter of 2024 Q1 is lower, but still a respectable 2.2%.

U.S. labor markets remain strong, as they have been throughout the post-pandemic economic recovery. Total nonfarm payroll jobs increased by 2.5% and are forecasted to increase by 1.5% in 2024. That 2024 is lower is more a function of running out of workers than an absence of jobs.

With underbuilding over the last 15 years and a growing population, there remains latent demand for new housing. This is exacerbated by population migration to the Sun Belt and the lack of existing housing inventory since the onset of the pandemic. As a result, the March forecast is for housing to remain close to, but under, the historical average of 1.5 million per year, enough to create a little weakness in 2024, but not enough to induce a recession. Although the January new home starts were at a level suggesting further weakness in housing, the issuance of new permits at approximately 1.5 million units, and the unseasonal weather in the east and Midwest, indicate this is only a temporary downturn in residential construction.

The oft predicted but never seen “recession next quarter” possibility has now faded in the face of expansionary fiscal policy, new national industrial policy and a consumer who is happy to continue spending. However, the impact of higher interest rates will be felt in restraining growth in 2024. As inflation slowly works its way back to the neighborhood of 2.5% to 3.0% per annum — kept high primarily because of residential rents, automobile repair and new health insurance premiums — the UCLA Anderson Forecast expects Fed policy to adopt a neutral stance and GDP growth to rebound to trend rates.

Nevertheless, there are risks to the forecast. A protracted shutdown of government has been averted, but the possibility still exists. Geopolitical events might upset the current growth pattern. The election could result in different national economic policies in 2025. These uncertainties are substantial and bear watching, as they could drive the economy off the current growth path that would return the U.S. economy to trend 2.5% growth. The upside of the forecast is productivity growth thanks to new technology that drives higher wages and higher GDP. While our view of AI and robotics is that the impact will be felt after 2026 because technology adoption tends to take time, current tight labor markets could accelerate that.

The California forecast

The employment picture in California varies, depending on which survey one consults. The household survey, which counts the number of people employed, reports that the number of people employed in December 2023 was 2.0% below the number in the pre-pandemic peak. The decline in employment over and above the decline in the labor force led to an increase in the unemployment rate to 5.1% in December. The labor force decline is attributable to retirements, migration out of state and individuals’ choosing to spend their time in non-market activities such as child raising. According to the enterprise survey metric, which counts the number of payroll jobs, California’s non-farm payroll jobs increased, and it now exceeds the pre-pandemic level by 508,100 jobs, over the same period.

The difference between the two metrics can be partly explained by the difference in the definition of employment in the two surveys. The household survey is a measure based on the domicile of the worker. If a former San Francisco office worker now works remotely in Phoenix, then that employee would not be counted in the state labor force or employment numbers for California in the household survey. This would represent a decrease in the state’s aggregate labor force. However, if the job was still at an

enterprise in San Francisco, the worker would remain in the enterprise survey as employed in San Francisco. They are working in San Francisco (virtually) and living in Phoenix (in true life). This, at least in part, explains the large decline in San Francisco's labor force.

Nevertheless, there seems to be a disconnect between the two surveys. Since the household survey is based on a small number of interviews with individuals and the enterprise payroll job survey is based on a large number of required regulatory reports, the March 8 benchmark partially resolved the disconnect in the direction of the payroll employment data, but not entirely.

The housing market in California continues to misbehave. Higher mortgage rates should send prices lower. Although home prices are lower than their previous peak, and the median price of existing single-family homes sold in the state declined on a seasonally adjusted basis by 4.5% as of May 2022, they have been climbing since December 2022 in San Diego by 9.3%, in Los Angeles by 9.0% and in San Francisco by 3.9%. With existing home sales at depression levels, builders are responding with new developments. The Winter 2024 Allen Matkins/UCLA Anderson Forecast Commercial Real Estate Survey reported that 32% of the panelists in northern California and 55% in Southern California would begin one or more new multifamily projects in 2024.

The California economy is forecasted to continue to grow faster than the U.S. but not by much. The risks to the forecast are the same as those for the nation: political and geopolitical. There is the potential for interest rates to disrupt the current expansion on the downside, and increased international immigration and accelerated onshoring of technical manufacturing on the upside...

Full news release at <https://www.anderson.ucla.edu/news-and-events/press-releases/ucla-anderson-forecast-sees-restrained-2024-growth-no-recession>.

The Forecast provided some estimates of the cost of the recent Hollywood strikes and found that the numbers thrown around in the news media were likely significantly overestimated. Also discussed was the likely impact of AI on entertainment and other fields. Video of the program will be available at a later date.

Maybe starting with an email on April 1 isn't the best idea

Friday, March 15, 2024



Not sure folks will take an April 1 email seriously. But there will be one:

As part of UC's commitment to the well-being and security of our community, a University-paid Identity Theft Protection Program through Experian will be provided for all benefit-eligible faculty, staff, and retirees beginning April 1, 2024.

Key features of the Experian Identity Theft Protection Program include:

1. Credit monitoring, reports, and scores: Receive credit reports, scores, and real-time alerts for any significant changes to your credit report, helping you detect potential identity theft.
2. Identity theft insurance and restoration services: Up to \$1 million of identity theft insurance and 24/7 restoration services in the unfortunate event of identity theft.
3. Dark web and proactive monitoring: Active scans of the dark web and many other databases for any compromised personal information.
4. Device protection and online privacy: A suite of privacy tools to help defend your digital data across all your devices.
5. Digital financial management: Financial tools and personalized insights to help you achieve your credit and financial goals.

Everyone eligible will be automatically enrolled, but action is required to take advantage of most of the program features.

On April 1, 2024, all faculty, staff, and retirees will receive a welcome email from Experian with a personalized link to access the Experian portal and complete their account set-up...

Full announcement and more details at:

<https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/2024/03/uc-introduces-employer-paid-identity-theft-protection-for-faculty-staff-and-retirees.html>.

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Note: It is unclear whether this offer by UC has anything to do with a cyberattack on UnitedHealth that was recently reported: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jamesfarrell/2024/03/13/department-of-health-investigating-unitedhealth-after-unprecedented-cyber-attack/>.

The FAFSA Drama Continues - Part 4 (buried lede)

Saturday, March 16, 2024



For those following the FAFSA fiasco drama, the NY Times had a feature article on what went wrong. Similarities with the fiasco accompanying the rollout for the website for Obamacare were noted. When you scroll down, there seems to be a buried lede:

... Some Education Department officials privately complained that the contractor hired to build the new FAFSA platform was missing deadlines, according to two people familiar with the concerns. They spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations. The company, General Dynamics Information Technology, was one of the contractors involved in the debacle of HealthCare.gov — an Obama-era online insurance marketplace that had a notoriously rough rollout in 2013.

A representative for General Dynamics Information Technology declined to comment, citing the company's contract, which requires that it refer questions back to the Education Department...

Full story at <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/15/us/SAT-scores-uc-university-of-california.html>.

Not sure what Chrissy is Cooking up for me...

Saturday, March 16, 2024

Hello,
How are things going for you today? I hope this communication finds you in good health. Please let me know if this is the proper email address to contact you at. I would appreciate it if you could confirm whether this email address is the most convenient way to communicate with you. Additionally, please feel free to provide an alternative contact method if necessary.

Regards
Chrissy Cook

If you get an email from Chrissy, you might not want to find out what she is cooking up for you.

The Latest on the Harvard Data Manipulation Affair - Part 2

Sunday, March 17, 2024



Blog readers may have a hard time recalling the data manipulation affair at Harvard, considering all the other things that have gone on there since it began.* But here is the latest from the Wall St. Journal:

A Harvard University probe into prominent researcher Francesca Gino found that her work contained manipulated data and recommended that she be fired, according to a voluminous court filing that offers a rare behind-the-scenes look at research misconduct investigations.

It is a key document at the center of a continuing legal fight involving Gino, a behavioral scientist who in August sued the university and a trio of data bloggers for \$25 million.

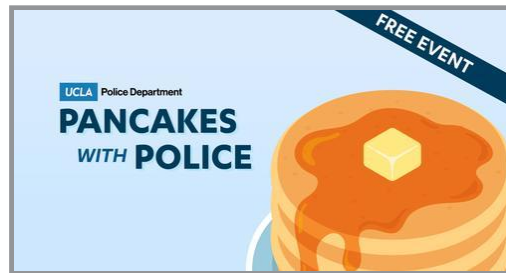
The case has captivated researchers and the public alike as Gino, known for her research into the reasons people lie and cheat, has defended herself against allegations that her work contains falsified data.

The investigative report had remained secret until this week, when the judge in the case granted Harvard's request to file the document, with some personal details redacted, as an exhibit. The investigative committee that produced the nearly 1,300-page document included three Harvard Business School professors tapped by HBS dean Srikant Datar to examine accusations about Gino's work. They concluded after a monthslong probe conducted in 2022 and 2023 that Gino "engaged in multiple instances of research misconduct" in the four papers they examined. They recommended that the university audit Gino's other experimental work, request retractions of three of the papers (the fourth had already been retracted at the time they reviewed it), and place Gino on unpaid leave while taking steps to terminate her employment. "The Investigation Committee believes that the severity of the research misconduct that Professor Gino has committed calls for appropriately severe institutional action," the report states...

=== * <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2023/11/the-latest-on-harvard-data-manipulation.html>.

Police Pancakes

Sunday, March 17, 2024



Found on Facebook:

Pancakes with Police is back! We're inviting the UCLA community over for breakfast on Tuesday, April 16, from 8-11 a.m. Join us for free pancakes and coffee while you meet our officers and enjoy interactive displays, photo opportunities, and station tours. BruinCards are required for entry by participants and their guests.

601 Westwood Plaza.

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/events/900154428463363/>.

Toxic Econ - Part 2

Monday, March 18, 2024



We have in the past posted stories about the website EJMR <https://www.econjobrumors.com/> (now XJMR) which caters to academic economists, originally to help job candidates, but has limited moderation. Bloomberg is the latest source of information about the website in a very lengthy article. Some excerpts:

... Started in 2008 as a website to help Ph.D. students and professors navigate academia's opaque job market, it soon became a forum for everything from ivory tower gossip to chatter about food or personal technology. (Recent, less inflammatory topics: "Canadian school flyouts," "Headline CPI increases to 3.2%" and "Pokemon is morally evil.")

Over the years, the site has also developed a reputation as a swamp of misogyny and racism, with a strict moderation policy but lax enforcement that's earned it comparisons to 4Chan, the ugly online forum. (Recent, more inflammatory topics on EJMR: "Would you ever hire a hot grad student as a postdoc?," "Why do feminists, critical theorists, postcolonial writers, etc know so little" and "Does tenure allow me to refuse teaching black people?" Those are just the printable ones.)

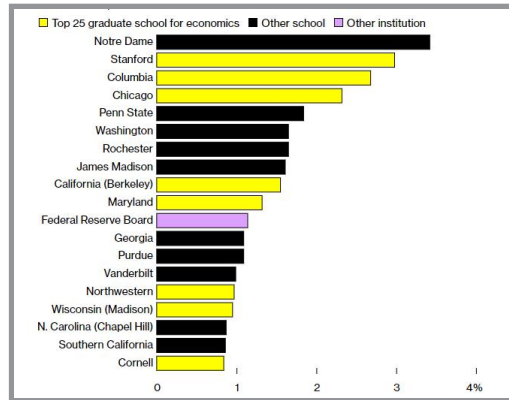
By the mid-2010s, the site had hundreds of thousands of visitors a month...

The culture war over EJMR has had implications for the profession, too. For decades, advocates for equality in economics have argued that the lack of women and minorities results in blinkered, narrow-minded policy (for example, not prioritizing research on child care or on the effects of incarceration). Economics as a field can't address real-world problems, they say, unless it first looks like the real world. Over the years, EJMR had become a symbol of that imbalance as well as a bastion of resistance to change. Its targets have included Melissa Kearney, a University of Maryland economics professor who's won recognition for her research on families and inequality, and Claudia Sahm, a former senior economist at the Federal Reserve who in a 2020 blogpost titled "Economics Is a Disgrace" denounced the profession as sexist, racist and elitist.

EJMR's influence has grown despite attempts to shut it down or create sanitized

alternatives. In some cases, anonymous attacks that started on the site eventually broke through into mainstream discourse. In December 2023, conservative activists published what they said was evidence that Harvard University's president, Claudine Gay, had plagiarized her dissertation, which added to an already-raging firestorm over the school's response to the war in Gaza and led to her resignation. An anonymous post on EJMR had made a similar claim months before. (Gay has said she's never misrepresented her findings or took credit for others' research.)...

[The article then goes on to describe how a subset of supposedly anonymous posts were traced to specific institutions.] ----- **Posts on Economics Job Market Rumors Share of all posts from US universities or research institutions on the site**



Sources: Ederer, Goldsmith-Pinkham, Jensen; U.S. News & World Report Share is the percentage of posts accounted for by the school or institution among all posts originating from IP addresses associated with US universities or research institutions. U.S. News economics graduate school rankings are for 2023-24. ----- Source: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2024-03-15/ejmr-economics-forum-posts-unmask-field-s-racism-and-sexism>.

----- Our earlier post on EJMR - XMJR: <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2023/07/toxic-econ.html>. It features a chart based on the percent of posts from various universities were classified as "toxic." The website has expanded to math, poli sci, and sociology, but seems less comprehensive and active in those fields. A still earlier post from 2017: <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2017/08/bias-in-econ.html>.

I agree

Monday, March 18, 2024



As blog readers will know, yours truly sometimes agrees or disagrees or partially agrees with positions taken by the Council of UC Faculty Associations (which can be seen if you read the blog with a PC) towards upper right. In any case, I agree with the Council's position on supporting the BOARS recommendations regarding high school math. Specifically, current algebra requirements should not be replaced by "data science" courses that do not provide equivalent material.

While yours truly would have written a different position statement, the bottom line would have been the same. Of course, not all college students desire to go into STEM fields, but an inadequate high school background could deprive them of that choice.

False Accusations

Tuesday, March 19, 2024



The Daily Cal carries a story about apparently false reports of harassment filed using UC-Berkeley and other email addresses against ASUC officials. Exactly, what the motive is and who is doing it is unclear:

Hundreds of nonconsensually submitted misconduct and harassment reports have been filed against some ASUC officials using random students' UC Berkeley emails. The reports — which are being submitted to campus offices, UCPD and other universities — accuse current ASUC officials of abusive conduct and harassment in the workplace, according to Ariana Quintana. Her email address has been used by unknown individual(s) to file two to three reports a day for the past week.

“ASUC is supposed to be student government. It's not supposed to ruin your life, and the emails I'm getting are people trying to ruin people's lives,” Quintana, who is also a finance associate in the ASUC Office of the Executive Vice President, said...

Full story at https://www.dailycal.org/news/campus/asuc/this-is-going-too-far-hundreds-of-nonconsensually-filed-misconduct-reports-made-against-asuc-officials/article_7ecdc492-df9b-11ee-898a-7f94b7b9e05e.html.

LA Times Calls on UC to Bring Back Testing

Tuesday, March 19, 2024



With the Regents meeting at UCLA tomorrow, the [LA Times](#) runs an editorial clearly aimed at them:

The SAT and ACT are making a small but important comeback after the tests were widely dropped as a requirement for college applications during the pandemic. Most schools went test-optional, meaning students could submit scores if they wanted but not doing so wouldn't count against them. The University of California won't consider test scores at all.

...The tests were criticized long before the pandemic as giving an unfair boost to more affluent students who could afford tutoring. And it's true that scores are closely correlated with family income. But the pause in testing gave colleges a chance to study the issue more closely. They found that SAT scores were extremely effective at predicting whether students would succeed in college.

No one should be surprised. The University of California convened a panel several years ago to study the issue at length and it reached the same conclusion. The standardized tests were more equitable than grades, the panel said, because grade inflation is more pervasive at affluent schools. Yet UC refuses to consider test scores, after bowing to pressure from critics. We hope that the trend toward reinstating the tests in admissions makes UC leaders rethink this position...

The whole debate has sadly ignored the bigger factors perpetuating the uneven playing field of college admissions. Yes, rich students can receive SAT tutoring, and it helps, though only a little. The most rigorous study of the topic found that tutoring could raise scores by about 20 points.

Meanwhile, some aspects of college admission tilt the field in favor of wealthier students more than test scores do. For example, teachers at more affluent schools have more time for writing letters of recommendation for college applications than teachers at low-income schools...

Essays can be coached, heavily edited or even written by college consultants for a fee. A 2021 study at Stanford University found that the quality of essay content was closely correlated with family income among University of California applicants. Yet UC kept the essays and got rid of the tests.

There is nothing inherently evil about the SAT or ACT. It all depends on how they're used. They can act as a reality check — a student who didn't get great grades might

show a lot of potential in the test scores, and vice versa. And, as UC did before it scrapped the tests, colleges should consider the scores in context, such as, is this the best score in a generally low-scoring high school? A score might reflect the education at that school, not the student's aptitude for college work...

Full editorial at <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2024-03-17/mit-brown-georgetown-universities-bring-back-sat-requirement>.

Changing Titles

Tuesday, March 19, 2024



The original topic - item J1 - for discussion at the Regents meeting on Wednesday, March 20, of a joint meeting of Academic and Student Affairs and Compliance and Audit was to be:

" Adoption of Regents Policy on the Use of University Administrative Websites."

That title has now been changed to:

" Adoption of Regents Policy on Public and Discretionary Statements by Academic Units."

No text of the proposal, either under the old title or the new one, has yet been posted.

As blog readers will know, at the January meeting the Regents debated a version of what is now J1 with a focus on the use of UC websites. There was debate focused on trying to define "landing pages" of websites, i.e., the debate seemed to revolve around the details of departmental political statements' locations rather than the idea of having a departmental position on a political issue. One can surmise from the title change now that the issue is whether departments of UC should take such official positions, regardless of the medium on which those positions are conveyed. Presumably, the new J1 does not limit the right of individuals, as opposed to "academic units," to take positions. Yours truly has seen posts on social media that seem to assume J1 refers to individuals, which seems unlikely. See the Instagram post below which refers to a supposed ban on all political speech:



https://www.instagram.com/p/C4rJIWRPPNI/?img_index=1

There would be some enforcement issues. If a department did post a political position on a campus website, campus IT authorities could remove it. However, if such a statement appeared anonymously on social media, at best UC could ask the platform to take it down which it might or might not do. And the poster would be unknown.

Unfortunately, without a specific text, all of the above is speculation based on the title change.

Changing Titles - Part 2 (update)

Tuesday, March 19, 2024



Update: The text of J1 has now been posted.* Some points after a quick reading: It is a long (4 page), meandering document. It refers only to UC websites, distinguishes between home pages (what were previously termed landing pages), and sets out guidelines for procedures for making department political statements on other-than-home pages. (It does not deal with statements that departments might make on other-than-UC platforms, e.g., tweets.) It lets departments come up with their own procedures for voting (by secret ballot) on statements, subject to various guidelines. It lets departments decide who composes the department. (There is no language that says whether non-ladder faculty, TAs, RAs, grad students, and undergraduates are, or are not, "in" the department; apparently departments decide who is in them.) It does not deal with implicit pressure for those who are not senior ladder faculty to go along with an official viewpoint. It explicitly forbids endorsements of candidates or ballot propositions. Finally, it does not deal with enforcement of the various rules and protections.

* <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/mar24/j1attach1.pdf>. There is an introduction to the text of J1 at <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/mar24/j1.pdf>.

TMT at the Regents Today

Wednesday, March 20, 2024



Included in today's agenda at the Regents' Academic and Student Affairs Committee is a report on "Astronomy at the University of California." Included is a section on the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) project that has been stalled by Native Hawaiian protests. This blog has, from time to time, reported on the TMT project which seems to have roiled state politics in Hawaii. Look for mention of TMT in public comments. It will be interesting to see whether the Regents themselves have a discussion of it, and - if so - what they say, when the report is presented.

... The Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) is a next-generation, ground-based telescope, capable of transformative science, from the origin of the universe to the search for other life-bearing Earths orbiting nearby stars. UC was a founding partner of the project, which now includes the California Institute of Technology and the national science foundations of Canada, India, and Japan. The U.S. National Academies 2020 Decadal Survey recommended a major federal government role in the two U.S. ELT projects as its highest priority for the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF). The other ELT project is the Giant Magellan Telescope, to be sited in the southern hemisphere, led by the Carnegie Institution for Science, Harvard University, and the University of Arizona, along with other partners. TMT has formally been proposed to the NSF, passed successfully through preliminary design review, and received design development funding. As of March 26, 2023, the National Science Board—the governing body of NSF—recommended that NSF support one project, requesting NSF to develop a selection process.

TMT and UC are monitoring these activities and planning a response when the selection process is developed. Construction of TMT was halted in 2019 by large-scale protests by the people of Hawai'i, unhappy with the impact of astronomy on Maunakea, a mountain that is sacred to many. Construction remains paused. TMT, with support from UC, has been working to build true partnerships in Hawai'i, listening to the concerns of the people, supporting education and workforce development, and developing programs to meaningfully meet the needs of the community. UC's partners at the Keck Observatory have been pioneers in Hawaiian community relations. The Legislature of Hawai'i passed

a law giving governance of Maunakea to a new Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority (MKSOA) which incorporates all voices into its leadership and will have authority over existing leases (such as the Keck Observatory) and future projects. MKSOA is an extremely positive development and creates hope for a just and shared solution to the role of astronomy in Hawai'i...

Full report at <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/mar24/a3.pdf>.

It's Hard to Keep the Lid On - Part 7 (national news report)

Wednesday, March 20, 2024



We have been saying all along that in the end it is difficult, if not impossible, to keep the lid on regarding the Amarasekare case, despite "no comment" and "confidentiality" efforts. It appears that the Chronicle of Higher Education has now lifted the lid, if not blown it off:

This month, Priyanga Amarasekare was invited to be the keynote speaker at a photo exhibition celebrating the natural beauty of her native Sri Lanka. The invitation noted the University of California at [sic] Los Angeles scholar's expertise in "tropical ecology, focusing on understanding patterns of biodiversity, species dispersal, and the impacts of climate change."

She wanted to accept, but there was one problem. Under the terms of an involuntary leave imposed eight months ago, Amarasekare is banned from most of the UCLA campus, including the art gallery where the event will be held next month.

It's just one of the rules she's had to navigate since she was suspended without pay in July 2022, and then put on involuntary paid leave a year later. Since October, when the restrictions were loosened slightly, she's been allowed on campus only in her office and lab. She's not permitted to talk about work with colleagues or students, except for the two remaining doctoral students she'd been cut off from for more than a year and two undergraduate students who had previously signed up to do research with her. She said she doesn't dare use the restroom, which is on a different floor. Meanwhile, she said, charges against her have continued to mount.

Amarasekare knows she could get in trouble for talking about any of this, especially to a reporter. But she said she's tired of feeling muzzled by confidentiality rules and wants to restore her reputation. She also wants to be sure, she said, that the "ongoing and unjust persecution" she believes she's facing doesn't happen to anyone else.

While scholars in her field, and some on her campus, have rallied to her defense, her newly public comments and documents she's shared also shed light on how she became a lightning rod in her department.

A 2022 report said the professor failed to cooperate with efforts “to correct her behavior” and treated those “who tried to bridge the gap between her and some of her colleagues with contempt.”

Last Monday, she learned that a charges committee of the Academic Senate had found probable cause that she had violated the Faculty Code of Conduct by sharing with outside parties a redacted copy of a 2022 report of the Academic Senate’s Privilege and Tenure hearing committee. A complainant said the release had damaged the university’s reputation, and the case will likely go to the Privilege and Tenure Committee for a hearing.

Based on Amarasekare’s decision to release the report despite the committee’s admonition not to, Michael S. Levine, UCLA’s vice chancellor for academic affairs and personnel, said he was concerned about the impact she might have if she returned to her regular duties. “I have no reason to believe that you will refrain from engaging in destructive and harmful conduct,” he wrote on June 23, 2023, notifying her of her involuntary leave. Considering the behavior she was called out for, he said, returning to campus could pose “a strong risk” of “immediate and serious harm” to the department and to the education of students.

Reputational Damage

The 2022 report, which The Chronicle obtained from someone not directly involved in the case, and who asked not to be identified, showed that the hearing committee had found Amarasekare responsible for breaching confidentiality about personnel matters and for “making evaluations of the professional competence of faculty members by criteria not directly reflective of professional performance.” It also said she had made unfounded public accusations against her colleagues, failed to cooperate with efforts “to correct her behavior,” and treated those “who tried to bridge the gap between her and some of her colleagues with contempt.”

According to the report, the faculty hearing committee had recommended a much more lenient punishment — censure, with a possible pay cut if the problems continued — than the chancellor, Gene D. Block, later meted out.

But Amarasekare says it’s the university’s conduct, not hers, that’s at fault. “If this information coming to light has damaged the university’s reputation, it is because of Chancellor Block’s decision to reject the hearing committee’s recommendation and suspend me without pay or benefits for a year and reduce my salary by 20 percent for two subsequent years,” Amarasekare wrote last week in an email to The Chronicle.

Documents she shared and her first on-the-record conversation since she was suspended in 2022 reveal how her sharp criticism of colleagues, whom she accused of discrimination, rankled department and university leaders. They also reveal the degree to which the university’s top leaders saw her as a divisive, even dangerous, presence in the department of ecology and evolutionary biology.

Amarasekare, one of two women of color with tenure in the department, stands 5-foot 2-inches and 100 pounds but commands a powerful presence in her field. In 2021, she received a Guggenheim Fellowship and the following year, one of the highest honors given by the Ecological Society of America — the Robert H. MacArthur Award.

The ink on UCLA's announcement of that prize barely dried when, two months later, on July 1, 2022, the chancellor notified her of her yearlong unpaid suspension. She was also cut off from her National Science Foundation-funded research, some of which examines the effects of rising temperatures on the survival of insect species. Since her suspension, she said, she's had no access to her UCLA email or online library resources. She was also banned from using campus offices or labs, or communicating with her students.

Amarasekare was also prohibited from serving on any graduate-student thesis committees, which cut her off from three doctoral students, one of whom has since graduated, who were counting on her for research support, mentoring, and letters of recommendation. All complained that being severed from their adviser set them back and added additional work overseeing the undergraduates who'd been working in her lab.

The disciplinary letters she's received are marked confidential. Amarasekare said that since they're in her personnel file, she has the right to share them, if nothing else, to prove that she's not being accused of scientific misconduct, or worse.

"I understand there could be repercussions, but I've already been so harmed," she told The Chronicle. She's tired of living "under the constant psychological terror of more and more charges being brought," she said. "Questions are being asked: Why would an institution go to such lengths if the person hasn't done something terrible?"

UCLA released a statement on Wednesday saying it couldn't comment on the specifics of Amarasekare's case. "While many unsubstantiated, misleading, and patently false claims have been made, we are bound by legal requirements and longstanding policies that treat personnel issues with confidentiality," the statement said. "Though this creates a frustrating imbalance in the public and media discourse around this topic, we must stand by the law and our policies, and thus will not comment on specific actions or procedures involving Professor Amarasekare. It's deeply unfortunate that this matter continues to cause significant harm to people who aren't able to respond because they are following legal restrictions and policies."

The statement went on to say that when a professor is absent, the university steps in to assign faculty members to support both the professor's undergraduate and graduate students, and to make sure that ongoing research can continue.

Getting Personal

Amarasekare traces much of her troubles to a lengthy post she wrote on an email discussion group set up for the department of ecology and evolutionary biology in August 2020. The intention of the group, the department's interim chair at the time wrote, was to hear from those who were hurt, "even if unintentionally, by any aspect of the EEB culture."

Amarasekare jumped on the opportunity to air her grievances. She wrote that for more than a decade, her department had been discriminating against people of color in recruitment, retention, and advancement and had repeatedly passed her over for leadership positions that went instead to white men. When she tried to complain, she wrote, her emails were either ignored or blocked.

Her comments about whom she considers a person of color may have ruffled a few feathers. She wrote that "no person of color" had served on the academic-personnel

committee, and then added that “by color” she means “the amount of pigmentation in one’s skin and not one’s ethnic origin.” When a task force to combat racism was set up, she wrote, it consisted of “three white faculty members, one white-skinned Hispanic male faculty, and the token Black member.”

“I never would have opened my mouth if I’d had any inkling my words would be used against me. My transparency and willingness to share my pain became weaponized.”

When she asked a department leader why she, “the only dark-skinned faculty member who has also experienced systemic racism for decades, and who outranked” nearly every committee member, had been excluded, Amarasekare said she didn’t receive a response.

A few months later, in October 2020, a colleague she identified only as “Professor R,” who was serving as an equity adviser for the College of Life Sciences, filed charges against her with the UCLA Academic Senate, and later with the university’s discrimination-prevention office, she said.

“He claimed that by critiquing his performance as DEI officer and suggesting that he step down, I had discriminated against him and harassed him on the basis of gender, ethnicity, and skin color,” Amarasekare wrote in a file she’d prepared to summarize the new charges and keep track of them for her own records.

She said that her complaints, which she reiterated in emails to department leaders, were based on his performance in the equity-adviser role, from which he later stepped down.

A source close to the situation, who asked not to be identified because of university confidentiality rules and the sensitivity of the matter, said that a UCLA faculty member — presumably Amarasekare — had demanded that the administration replace “Professor R” as equity adviser because the faculty member didn’t view “Professor R,” a Latino, as a “true minority” because of his lighter complexion.

Amarasekare believes the discussion group where she posted her complaints “was established as a safe space” for people to open up in the aftermath of George Floyd’s murder, when emotions were high. “I never would have opened my mouth if I’d had any inkling my words would be used against me.” In retrospect, the group amounted to “entrapment,” she said. “My transparency and willingness to share my pain became weaponized.”

In conversation, she’s alternately self-deprecating, referring to herself as feeling “tainted and radioactive” when she’s on campus, and self-aggrandizing, saying she’s “beloved” in her profession and “blew away” an audience with a recent speech.

In the documents she shared with *The Chronicle*, Amarasekare uses pseudonyms or crosses out the names of her colleagues. She didn’t name them in her conversation with *The Chronicle*, but it was evident from the context and from background conversations with former students that “Professor R” refers to Paul H. Barber, a professor of ecology and evolutionary biology.

Barber is a Mexican American scholar who for two decades has led and supported efforts to diversify STEM fields and published scholarship on systemic racism in higher education. In an email to *The Chronicle*, he said that, as an equity adviser, he had no

investigative or disciplinary authority and that his role consisted of advising people “how to seek remedies for prohibited conduct.” Equity advisers “have a mandatory reporting responsibility for discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence/harassment, an obligation I always fulfilled,” he wrote. “Any suggestions to the contrary are demonstrably false.”

Amarasekare told The Chronicle that in August 2022 the university’s dean of life sciences, Tracy Johnson, also came to his defense, filing charges accusing Amarasekare of creating a hostile environment that forced “Professor R” to relinquish his equity adviser role. Johnson was not made available for comment.

‘Forced Out’

On June 23, 2023, when Amarasekare’s one-year suspension was ending, Levine, the vice chancellor, notified her that her status was changing to paid involuntary leave. He reminded her that an Academic Senate charges committee had found probable cause earlier that year that, before her suspension, she had “intentionally disrupted” a professor’s personnel-review meeting (Amarasekare told The Chronicle she was drawing their attention to student reviews that questioned whether the professor was adequately sensitive to the needs of minority students). Levine also said in that letter that a Discrimination Prevention Office investigation had found her responsible for harassing a professor he didn’t name. Amarasekare told The Chronicle that the investigation was conducted by an external evaluator and, based on advice from her lawyer, she declined to participate. She said her lawyer had questioned whether, based on information that the charges committee had introduced, the probe would be fair to her.

What hurt the most, Amarasekare said, was not the disciplinary actions themselves, but the message they conveyed. “What really destroyed me was the condemnation that came with it. Here’s someone who engaged in such serious misconduct that they suspended her without pay, then docked her salary for two more years. It has to be something extremely egregious.”

The Council of UC Faculty Associations and the UCLA Faculty Association released a joint statement to The Chronicle last Monday saying they were “deeply concerned” about the administration’s handling of Amarasekare’s case. “In particular, we are disturbed that the recommendations by UCLA’s Privilege and Tenure Hearing Committee were vastly superseded by Chancellor Gene Block,” with no written justification, the statement said. They urged the chancellor to rescind the tougher penalty “and ensure that an independent and fair process free from interference from UCLA administrators can move forward.”

The statement said, “Charges of discrimination and harassment levied upon a racialized woman faculty is a serious charge, and we hope that any investigation will include people who are uniquely equipped to assess such charges with the racial and gendered sensitivity that is required.”

Andy Dobson, a professor of ecology and evolutionary biology at Princeton University, helped organize a petition signed by hundreds of international scholars calling for Amarasekare’s reinstatement. In an interview last Monday, he said he found the university’s treatment of Amarasekare “an extreme abuse of power.”

“I’m appalled at the way the administration is persecuting a person of color. All she did

was stand up for her rights,” Dobson said.

“She’s in a dreadful state, trying to get jobs, but deans at other universities are being super cautious and blocking any job offers she has.”

In December 2022, Amarasekare said, a job offer with another public university in California was rescinded after she was asked to sign a release form and UCLA shared the chancellor’s July 2022 letter of sanction. The letter referred to serious but unspecified violations of the Faculty Code of Conduct. She’s applied for other jobs that have gone nowhere.

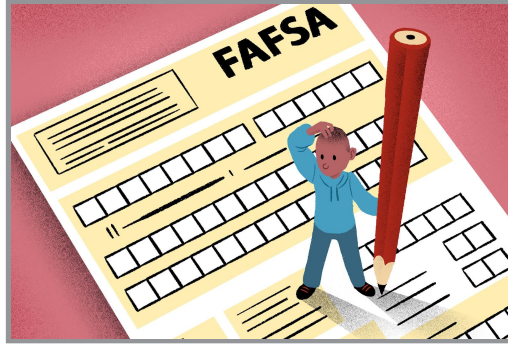
“I’m facing being forced out of academia, of doing what I’ve enjoyed all my life and been so successful at and where I’ve been helping so many people,” Amarasekare said. A widow with two teenage children, she said her physical and emotional health suffered during the year she was unpaid, with no health insurance. “My two children have spent their entire lives under the shadow of their mother’s struggles for fair treatment, and now they have to spend the rest of their lives with the burden of having a mother accused of and punished for serious misconduct,” she wrote in an email to The Chronicle.

She also believes that, with her climate-change research, she has “a huge responsibility to the public.” Setting back that research, she said, “is a senseless thing to do.”

Source: <https://www.chronicle.com/article/ucla-punished-a-prominent-scientist-for-destructive-and-harmful-conduct-she-says-its-unjust-persecution>.

The FAFSA Drama Continues - Part 5 (the numbers drop)

Thursday, March 21, 2024



From The Hill: *The number of students who have applied for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is far behind previous years, leaving experts concerned many may opt out all together after a tumultuous rollout of the new system by the Department of Education.*

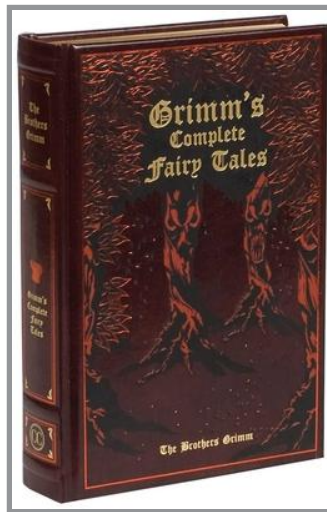
Around 5.7 million students have applied for FAFSA, a fraction of the average 17 million at this point in the cycle.

While there is still some time for the numbers to rise, advocates are skeptical and pointing to the delays and confusion during the release of this year's revamped forms as a cause...

Full story at <https://thehill.com/homenews/education/4534943-fafsa-applications-college-students/>.

Grim Tale on the State Budget

Thursday, March 21, 2024



From [CalMatters](#): ... *Whatever projections you go by, the budget deficit will influence nearly every policy decision the Legislature will make as it hammers out a budget agreement. On Thursday, Senate Democrats got a jump start by announcing early budgetary action to “shrink the shortfall” by about \$17 billion, while agreeing to the use of \$12.2 billion of the state’s rainy day fund that Newsom proposed earlier. The result is a proposal that reduces the state deficit to what Senate Leader Mike McGuire of Santa Rosa and Senate budget committee chairperson Scott Wiener of San Francisco say is a “more manageable” \$9 to \$24 billion. Doing this in the spring sets up lawmakers to tackle more of the deficit when the Legislature and Newsom must come to a deal by late June for the 2024-25 budget, the Senate leaders said.*

McGuire, in a statement: “The Senate’s plan to shrink the shortfall protects core programs, includes no new tax increases for Californians, makes necessary reductions, and takes a prudent approach to utilizing the Rainy Day Fund so we can be prepared for any future tough times.” The plan includes cuts to various programs in 2024-25 by \$2.1 billion, deferring and delaying about \$4.6 billion in spending and increasing revenue or borrowing by \$3.6 billion. The Senate is also contemplating \$3.7 billion in spending cuts, delays, shifts and other budget tweaks for the current budget year.

In response to Thursday’s Senate proposal, Newsom said in a statement that he looks “forward to seeing this proposal move forward quickly.” Today, he visited the Capitol to talk to legislative leaders on the budget. The Legislative Analyst’s Office has presented lawmakers options to claw back some of the money agencies can spend now beyond what Newsom proposed in January — such as in higher education and programs to combat climate change — to have more cash left over to tackle future deficits. The point is to “pause program implementation and capture savings,” the office wrote.

Jesse Gabriel, an Encino Democrat and chairperson of the Assembly’s budget committee, said Friday that his colleagues will review the Senate’s plan “closely over the coming weeks.” Gabriel also said he anticipates cuts to climate change and that housing programs will be under the microscope, but that there will be no new taxes on individuals

or families in the 2024-25 budget.

Gabriel: "We are saying our prayers and lighting our candles and lighting our incense and hoping that... our revenues come in better than expected." ...

Full story at <https://calmatters.org/newsletter/california-budget-senate-early-action/>.

Reminder: Wait for your April Fool's Day email

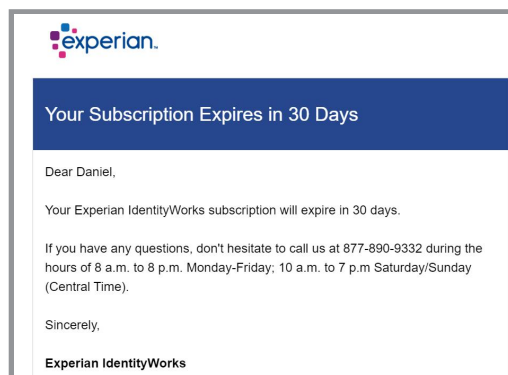
Thursday, March 21, 2024



We posted recently that UC community members would be receiving an email from Experian, the credit rating service, indicating that UC would be supplying them with ID monitoring.*

Blog readers will also know that after a serious data breach several years back, UC provided such protection for a limited period (that was extended).

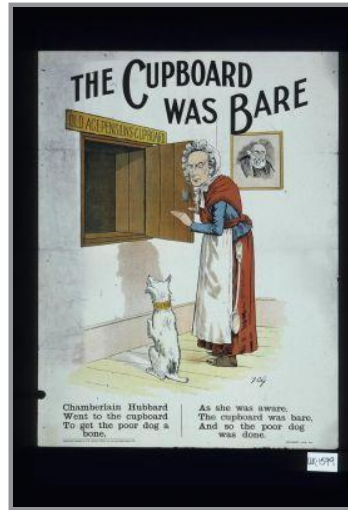
The result of the old coverage now expiring is apparently an email notice from Experian that makes no mention of the new coverage that will be available. See below:



It is probably best to ignore the expiration email and wait for the April 1 message. === *
<https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/03/maybe-starting-with-email-on-april-1.html>.

Budget Woes

Friday, March 22, 2024



The latest controller's report (through February) shows us in receipt of \$125.6 billion in revenue so far in the current fiscal year. That is \$29 billion less than was projected when the current year's budget was enacted and \$5 billion below what the governor estimated we would have at the time of his January budget proposal.

Overestimation of the personal income tax receipts was the main villain in both cases.

The controller's news release is at <https://sco.ca.gov/Files-ARD/CASH/February2024StatementofGeneralFundCashReceiptsandDisbursements.pdf>.

The Way We Live Now (at Berkeley) – Part 2

Friday, March 22, 2024



As blog readers will know, a group of parents hired a private guard service to patrol the UC-Berkeley campus in response to reports of crime.* The hiring, however, was only for a limited time period, presumably to push the Berkeley administration to add more security. The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) covers the story:

Dusk was gathering around the UC Berkeley campus as six security guards began their rounds, radios crackling from their bright yellow jackets... The guards, hired by parents so unsettled by campus crime that they raised \$42,000 for private patrols, are on a short-term pilot program from March 6 to 23. Each night, they circle the elite university from 6:30 p.m. to 3 a.m., tracing a perimeter bounded by frat row, the dormitory high-rises and Telegraph Avenue.

Since they are not authorized to enter school property, the security officers instead plod up and down sidewalks or bicycle along roadways, offering to walk students home and occasionally snapping selfies with bystanders. They have orders to avoid physical confrontations, track interactions with the public, and call 911 if they witness serious criminal behavior.

To date, the SafeBears ambassadors have provided safety escort services to 49 people, engaged nine times with people living on the street and conveyed visitor information to 42 people. As of Monday, they had not intervened in any disturbances. But in at least one sense, the program has been wildly successful. Parents have put a spotlight on campus safety and mounted pressure on the university...

University officials, however, express skepticism. "Hiring private security raises a number of concerns including the training and experience of individuals hired by such firms," a university spokesperson told the Chronicle in an email correspondence, responding to a series of questions about SafeBears. The spokesperson indicated that UC Berkeley administrators do not support spending university funds on security contractors, assuring the money would be better allocated "hiring more sworn or non-sworn UCPD officers." ...

Full story at <https://www.sfchronicle.com/crime/article/uc-berkeley-private-security-guards-18985225.php>.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/03/the-way-we-live-now-at-berkeley.html>.

First Lady Jam

Friday, March 22, 2024



From [Santa Monica Patch](#): *First Lady Jill Biden is expected to Fly into Hollywood Burbank Airport Friday afternoon to kick off a series of fundraisers and events across the Southland through Monday.*

*Her arrival is expected to affect rush-hour traffic as the first lady's motorcade heads from the airport in Burbank to **an undisclosed fundraiser in Los Angeles** at 5 p.m. Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass will meet Biden at the airport upon her arrival scheduled for 4 p.m.*

After Friday night's fundraiser, Biden is expected to head to Palm Springs Saturday afternoon for a fundraiser in Rancho Mirage at 11:30 a.m...

Full story at <https://patch.com/california/santamonica/s/ivhv4/first-lady-jill-biden-to-land-in-la-for-a-series-of-fundraisers>.

Fundraiser events in the past have often been on the Westside in the UCLA general area.

Who Did It?

Saturday, March 23, 2024



We have been following the Gino/data manipulation affair at Harvard.* From the Harvard Crimson:

Harvard Business School professor Francesca Gino — who came under fire for allegations of data manipulation — suggested that Boston University professor and co-author Nina Mažar tampered with her data, according to an internal HBS report. Mažar, whose name has not been previously reported, was identified in the report as one of two female co-writers with Gino on a prominent 2012 study, following which The Crimson confirmed her identity. The copy of the report was unsealed by a judge on Thursday with redactions of Mažar's name throughout the document.

"I was stunned to learn of Professor Gino's false claims about me," Mažar wrote in a statement Tuesday evening. "Those claims have no basis in reality," Mažar added. "I am nevertheless grateful that Harvard undertook the work necessary to spell out all the reasons that her allegations amount to nothing but an unfortunate attempt to shift the blame and focus from her." ...

According to the report, Gino provided two initial defenses in response to the investigation: that the data anomalies were due to honest error, and that someone other than her tampered with the data...

Full story at <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2024/3/19/gino-suggests-mazar-manipulation/>.

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*Type "Gino" into the search engine for this blog for past references.

Watch the Regents' Morning Session of March 20, 2024

Saturday, March 23, 2024



We'll be covering the Regents meetings of March 20-21 as time permits. As always, we preserve the recordings of the various sessions indefinitely since the Regents have no fixed policy on retention. Links are provided below. The morning session of March 20 (Wednesday) began with public comments. Topics included concerns about repressed Asian student admissions, anti-Israel statements, complaints about antisemitism, HBCU scholarships, data science courses for admissions, basic needs, textbook costs, labor issues at UC-San Francisco, UC law fellowship funding, sexual assault services, math standards, opposition and support of item J1 (website statements), financial support for MSW students, UC sustainability goals, staffing issues, and staff pay.

There was a disturbance at the end of the meeting - apparently over labor negotiation issues - that caused the room to be cleared. Some of what had been scheduled for the morning was shoe horned into the afternoon program.

At Public Engagement and Development, there was a review of the state budget outlook (not good for UC), a statement that UC was going along with the 5% "deferral," essentially meaning that the increase due under the "compact" would not take place. Support for a possible education bond that would provide funds for deferred maintenance was expressed. It was noted that federal NSF spending would be reduced.

There was a review of the use of AI. It was noted that we might have to see a return to the "blue book" for exams.

The UCLA Bruin Hub program for commuter students was explained, essentially a location with study desks and sleeping pods. Finally, a website touting UC's economic impact was noted.

Compliance and Audit met in open session for a few minutes to approve an auditor.

You can see the morning session at:

<https://archive.org/details/regents-board-public-comments-3-20-2024>.

The initial meeting of the full board up to the disturbance is at:

<https://ia800204.us.archive.org/13/items/regents-board-public-comments-3-20-2024/Regents-Board%20-%20public%20comments%203-20-2024.mp4>.

The Public Engagement and Development meeting is at:

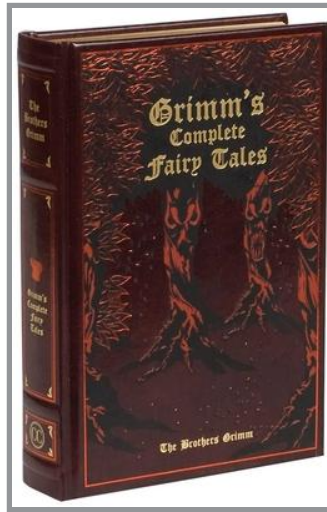
<https://ia800204.us.archive.org/13/items/regents-board-public-comments-3-20-2024/Regents-Public%20Engagement%20and%20Development%203-20-2024.mp4>.

Compliance and Audit is at:

<https://ia800204.us.archive.org/13/items/regents-board-public-comments-3-20-2024/Regents-Compliance%20and%20Audit%203-20-2024.mp4>.

Grim Tale on the State Budget - Part 2

Sunday, March 24, 2024



From the LA Times: ... Gov. Gavin Newsom and Democratic leaders of the state Senate and Assembly announced an agreement on Wednesday to take action in April to begin to dramatically reduce California's historic shortfall.

The problem: Democrats at the state Capitol couldn't actually agree on an amount — offering only a range of \$12 billion to \$18 billion — or explain what, exactly, they plan to cut. Those details, the governor's office said, will be discussed and shared next month.

The head-scratching announcement of a plan to have a plan comes as pressure mounts on Democrats over the looming fiscal crisis...

Only a handful of lawmakers have experience in office during the prior budget crisis, and Newsom has never been forced to make cuts of this magnitude...

Full story at <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-03-21/newsom-and-lawmakers-announce-plan-to-cut-at-least-12-billion-off-deficit-with-no-details>.

Watch the Regents Afternoon Sessions of March 20, 2024

Monday, March 25, 2024



The afternoon meeting of the Regents on March 20th partly picked up material delayed from the morning due to a disturbance at the morning meeting. Regent chair Leib took note of antisemitic incidents as did President Drake in remarks. Faculty rep Steintrager expressed concerns about the issues of the chancellor selection process and debate about online degrees in which there was a clash between the Regents and the Academic Senate. He indicated that faculty might turn to unionization if the Academic Senate was continually overridden. There was then a disturbance causing the room to be cleared.

When the meeting turned to item J1 (departmental political statements) when the meeting resumed, Regent Sures - who had developed the revised version noted it was an action item but that he would be willing to have it reviewed as a discussion item if that were necessary. The revised version essentially took the version from the January meetings and incorporated the 2022 guidelines of the Academic Senate (which have largely been ignored). But the guidelines would be mandates under J1. Steintrager wanted to have the new version sent back to the Senate. UCLA Dean of Humanities Alex Stern described some steps already taken by UCLA. President Drake said the new version was not yet ready for adoption. Ultimately, the options boiled down to adopting J1 or delaying decision to the May meeting and having a Senate review of the new version within that time period. The latter approach was adopted.

At Finance and Capital Strategies, there was reluctant approval of a seismic upgrade project at the UC-Davis hospital whose costs rose dramatically, leading to the firing of the team in charge and new management being brought in. In response to questions, it was reported at there would be legal action taken to try and recover some of the overrun. Other projects were approved without considerable debate. In response to a question about UC-Merced finances from a student rep, Regent Pérez made the point that student tuition covers the cost of student education and is not used for additional projects. (There is more to be said about that assertion, largely over the difference between marginal and average. The average cost includes a certain amount of overhead which is also needed for non-teaching functions.)

As always, we preserve the meeting since the Regents have no policy regarding recording retention. The general link for the afternoon session is at:

<https://archive.org/details/regents-board-joint-meeting-academic-and-student-affairs-compliance-and-audit-pt-1-3-20-2024>

Discussion of J1 is at:

https://archive.org/download/regents-board-joint-meeting-academic-and-student-affairs-compliance-and-audit-pt-1-3-20-2024/Regents-Board%2C%20Joint%20Meeting_%20Academic%20and%20Student%20Affairs%20%26%20Compliance%20and%20Audit%20pt%201%203-20-2024.mp4

and

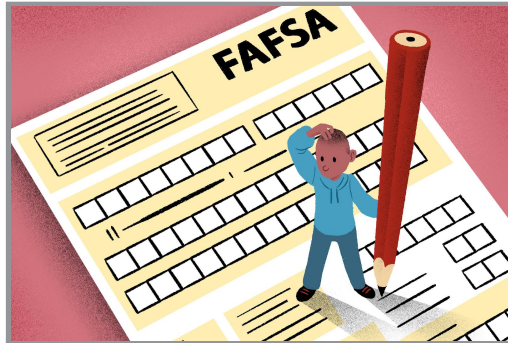
https://ia800209.us.archive.org/29/items/regents-board-joint-meeting-academic-and-student-affairs-compliance-and-audit-pt-1-3-20-2024/Regent-Joint%20Meeting_%20Academic%20and%20Student%20Affairs%20%26%20Compliance%20and%20Audit%20pt%202%203-20-2024.mp4 .

Finance and Capital Strategies is at:

<https://ia800209.us.archive.org/29/items/regents-board-joint-meeting-academic-and-student-affairs-compliance-and-audit-pt-1-3-20-2024/Regents-Finance%20and%20Capital%20Strategies%203-20-2024.mp4> .

The FAFSA Drama Continues - Part 6 (inaccuracy)

Monday, March 25, 2024



From the Chronicle of Higher Education: *A technical problem with the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, has resulted in inaccurate estimates of some applicants' aid eligibility, the U.S. Department of Education announced on Friday. The latest snag in a series of complications with the new form will require the department to reprocess and resend a few hundred thousand aid applications to colleges this spring, probably delaying when those students will receive financial-aid offers.*

The problem, which the department said had been fixed, affected applications from dependent students who reported assets on their FAFSA, according to the announcement. Previously, the FAFSA-processing system was not including all the data fields required to correctly calculate the Student Aid Index, a number that colleges use to determine how much federal aid an applicant should receive. The department said that the problem, which affected student-aid records delivered before March 21, resulted in an inaccurate total of what a student can contribute — and thus an “SAI that was lower than expected.”

That's important because the lower students' SAIs are, the greater their financial need. And the greater their need is, the more federal aid — grants, loans, work-study — they're eligible for...

Justin Draeger, president and chief executive of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, described the miscalculation as “another unforced error” that would probably prolong some students' wait for aid offers...

Full story at <https://www.chronicle.com/article/miscalculation-in-fafsa-formula-is-another-unforced-error>.

Watch the March 21, 2024 Regents Meetings

Tuesday, March 26, 2024



The session opened with the full board hearing public comments. Topics covered were antisemitism, opposition to the Hawaiian telescope (TMT), decarbonization (anti-fossil fuels), staffing problems, staff pay, item J1 (departmental political statements - deferred to May meetings), substance abuse services, sexual abuse services, undocumented students, climate change, and FAFSA deadlines. A talk by an undergraduate student leader also picked up on FAFSA problems and substance abuse. Regent Makarechian, who had been attending meetings on Zoom after a major accident appeared in person. A graduate student leader spoke about professional tuition supplements and protested against unpaid internships required in some professional programs. There was then a presentation on CRISPR technology by Prof. Jennifer Doudna. A brief disturbance occurred during her remarks but the meeting continued.

The second part of the full board meeting featured a presentation on UC basic needs programs. A disturbance occurred but the session continued after a warning. A presentation on UC sustainability policies followed.

The Investments Committee featured a presentation by students in the "Investment Academy" sponsored by the Investments team. Some kind of unheard disruption occurred but, after warning, the presentation continued. There was then some discussion of a UC program to invest in its own medical IT - a kind of internal venture capital program modeled after a program at CalTech. A disturbance at that point led to the room being cleared. After the meeting resumed, CIO Bachhar cited AI, climate change, demographics, and "deglobalization" as factors affecting the investment outlook along with the two current wars. Regent Makarechian indicated that the Investments Committee should focus less on past and current events and performance and more on how future events would affect the long term outlook. He wondered if the expectation for the pension of a return of 6.25%/annum was realistic. Should it be raised or lowered?

As always, we preserve recordings of Regents meetings since the Regents have no fixed policy on retention.

The general link for the March 21 meeting is at:

<https://archive.org/details/regents-board-part-1-3-21-2024>.

Part 1 of the full board is at:

<https://ia800205.us.archive.org/9/items/regents-board-part-1-3-21-2024/Regents-Board%20Part%201%203-21-2024.mp4>.

Part 2 of the full board is at:

<https://ia800205.us.archive.org/9/items/regents-board-part-1-3-21-2024/Regents-Board%20part%202%203-21-2024.mp4>.

The Investments Committee is at:

<https://ia800205.us.archive.org/9/items/regents-board-part-1-3-21-2024/Regents-Investments%20Committee%203-21-2024.mp4>.

The Trust Building Downtown

Wednesday, March 27, 2024



From [UrbanizeLA](#): *Nine months acquiring the historic Trust Building in Downtown Los Angeles to use as a satellite campus, UCLA is shedding light on what's coming to 433 S. Spring Street.*

The 11-story building, which was the recently the subject of a head-to-toe restoration by Rising Realty Partners., was completed in 1928 as corporate offices, and features approximately 334,000 square feet of interior space. The initial 31 occupants of the property range from programs addressing climate change to those touching on employment, housing, immigration, public health, and criminal justice reform. Sorted by category, they include:

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Academic

Center for Justice and UCLA Prison Education Program

Center X Community Learning Hub

Division of Continuing Education and UCLA Extension

Global Los Angeles Commons

Humanities DTLA: From Word to Action

Labor Studies at UCLA Downtown

Latino Policy & Politics Institute Voting Rights Project

UCLA Law Centers and Institutes Downtown Engagement Space

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Arts

Department of Theater Faculty Collaborative Research Studios

DTLA Community Media Lab

Extended Reality and Artificial Intelligence Research Studio

UCLA ARTS DTLA

World Arts & Cultures / Dance Downtown Arts Center

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Community Outreach

Advancing Climate Action, Environmental Justice and Community Engagement

Advancing Worker Justice in Los Angeles

Making History in Los Angeles

The People's Library

UCLA Community Youth Programs

UCLA Government and Community Relations Satellite Office

UCLA School of Law Clinical Programs Downtown Hub

UCLA Skid Row Partnership

Center for Community College Partnerships

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Research

California Policy Lab at UCLA

Community Engaged Research, Innovation, and Social Transformation Lab

Center for Research on the Acquisition of Languages of Los Angeles

Downtown Luskin

Los Angeles Education Research Institute

Research Justice Hub

Sustainable LA Grand Challenge

UCLA Center for LGBTQ+ Advocacy, Research & Health

UCLA Pritzker Center DTLA Community Catalyst

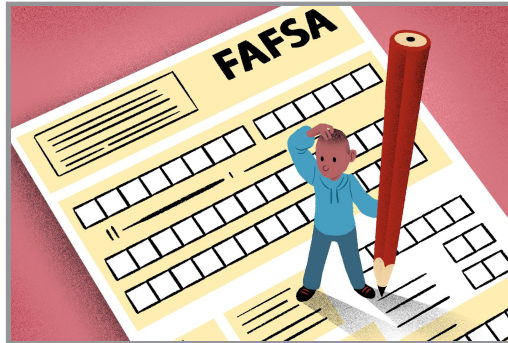
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"We are thrilled that this initial cohort of programs will engage members of the local community, position UCLA as a trusted leader and collaborator in our global city, and have a positive impact that will be felt in downtown and far beyond," said Chancellor Gene Block and Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Darnell Hunt in a written message to the UCLA campus.

The Trust Building is one of two major acquisitions made by UCLA in the 2023 calendar year. In December, the university capped off the year by closing on the shuttered Westside Pavilion mall, which will be converted into a cavernous research park housing the California Institute for Immunology and Immunotherapy at UCLA, the UCLA Center for Quantum Science and Engineering, and other programs.

The FAFSA Drama Continues - Part 7 (more delay)

Thursday, March 28, 2024



There seems to be no end to the FAFSA fiasco. From *Inside Higher Ed: The Education Department announced Monday that students will not be able to make corrections or adjustments to their student aid until “the first half of April”—potentially weeks later than had been predicted at the beginning of the month.*

The department also said it would only start reprocessing the 200,000 forms affected by last week’s calculation error after the forms had been opened for student corrections, meaning most colleges won’t be able to send out complete and accurate financial aid offers until May. While many institutions have pushed back commitment deadlines to May 15 or June 1 due to the FAFSA delays, May 1 remains the standard decision deadline for the majority of colleges.

The department also gave an update on FAFSA processing and Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR) delivery, the latter of which began two weeks ago but was bogged down by software issues. As of March 25, the department said it had processed 4.3 million forms—up from 1.5 million last Friday—and delivered ISIRs to “the majority of schools, states, and designated scholarship organizations.” Officials say they’re on track to complete both processing and transmission by the end of the month.

Source: <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2024/03/26/students-cant-make-fafsa-corrections-until-april>.

No word so far that anyone in charge is being held accountable.

Something to Worry About

Thursday, March 28, 2024



Inside Higher Ed today carries a story about a university that wanted to find out whether students taking online tests could cheat despite the services of companies that are supposed to prevent such cheating. Basically, these companies take control of the student's camera and look for any signs that the student is looking away from the screen or that there is someone in the room assisting.

But there are also companies that, for a fee, say they can take the test for a student and defeat the anti-cheating protections. They do so by taking control of the computer the student is using. The cheating student just has to stare at the screen and seem to be taking the test. And their methodology apparently works!

But there is a catch - for the cheater. The cheating company in taking over the computer acquires access to anything that is on it, things like bank records, etc. And it is in a position to blackmail the cheater since it has proof of cheating which it could reveal to the university (or anyone else).

All of this was revealed when a university hired someone to see if cheating online was possible. Indeed, it was possible and all the other bad things were also found to be possible. You can read about it at:

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/students/academics/2024/03/28/sting-operation-fools-proctoring-service-blackmail-attempted>.

Replacing Dormzilla

Friday, March 29, 2024



Remember the proposed Munger Hall, aka Dormzilla, that was supposed to be built at UC-Santa Barbara? As blog readers will know, Dormzilla - like its semi-namesake Godzilla - died at the end of the story. It appears that a more pleasant plan for student housing is now on the way. From The Architect's Newspaper:

Officials from the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB) announced recently that SOM and Mithun have been selected to design new dormitories on a site at the corner of Mesa and Stadium Roads in San Benito County. The effort is part of a broader initiative to increase student housing across the campus by 2029. The announcement marks the first student housing project on the campus in a decade as part of the University's 2010 Long Range Development Plan. In total, SOM and Mithun are designing seven buildings for nearly 2,140 students on the northwest corner of the main UCSB campus in phase one of the project...

Moving forward, the architects are engaging with students, staff, administration, and faculty. Planning and design on phase two—which encompasses residential buildings on the southeast end of the campus—should start this summer. The design team seeks to gain approval from the UC Board of Regents in May 2024, and begin construction in 2025.

Full story at <https://www.archpaper.com/2024/03/som-mithun-design-new-student-dorms-ucsb/>.

The Way We Live Now (at Berkeley) – Part 3 (final?)

Friday, March 29, 2024



We have been noting on this blog the efforts of some UC-Berkeley parents to pressure the campus administration to add more security. The parents hired private guards for a short period to pressure the university into doing more. The [LA Times](#) reports on the now-concluded episode:

...The program ran from March 6 to 23 and was formed in response to what SafeBears organizers see as an inadequate response from the university to a growing crime problem in and around the school. The parent group paid roughly \$42,000 for six unarmed guards to patrol around the student housing and south of the campus. "There were some requests for service, escorts or directions. But really the No. 1 service these guys provided was just their physical presence being a deterrent to crime," said SafeBears founder Sagar Jethani, who is a Southern California resident and father to two UC Berkeley students...

University officials say they believe the parents' funds would be better spent hiring more sworn and non-sworn police officers, a UC Berkeley spokesperson said in a statement. "Parents who want to donate funds toward additional campus security can do so via a university fund that has been established," the statement said. "We do not believe that private security should take precedence over hiring sworn officers."

Full story at <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-03-27/uc-berkeley-parents-hired-private-security-fearing-for-their-kids>.

Need for a New Master Plan - Once Again - Part 2

Saturday, March 30, 2024



UC President Clark Kerr hands

Master Plan to Gov. Pat Brown From time to time, we have pointed to the need for a new Master Plan for Higher Education. The old one actually expired in 1975, but people continue to refer to it as a live document. It outlined roles for each of the three segments of public higher ed, UC, CSU, and community colleges.

Nowadays, the division of labor envisioned in the 1960 document, is eroding on an ad hoc basis. The most visible element of erosion is the move to community colleges to offer specialized four-year bachelors degrees. From EdSource:

Six additional bachelor's degree programs have been approved across California's community colleges, the state chancellor's office for the college system announced. With the approvals, there are now 39 bachelor's degree programs that are being offered or will soon be offered across the community college system. The latest programs to be approved include respiratory care at Antelope Valley College, paramedicine at College of the Siskiyous, dental hygiene at both Cypress College and Oxnard College, paralegal studies at Santa Ana College and respiratory care therapist at Victor Valley College...

There are now 32 different community colleges across the state with at least one bachelor's degree program. A few colleges have multiple offerings, including Antelope Valley, Cypress and Santa Ana with their latest approvals. The number of bachelor's degrees being offered across the community colleges will likely continue to increase. In January, colleges submitted another 13 program applications that are currently under review. Under a 2021 state law, the community college system can approve up to 30 bachelor's degrees annually, across two cycles each year...

Because the community colleges can't create bachelor's degree programs that are already available at CSU and UC, that has prevented them from offering degrees in some fields with worker shortages, such as nursing. Newly proposed legislation aims to change that: Senate Bill 895 would allow 15 community colleges to begin offering bachelor's degrees in nursing...

Full story at <https://edsource.org/2024/california-community-colleges-approve-6-new-bachelors-degree-programs/708463>.

April Retirement Webinars

Sunday, March 31, 2024



If you are thinking of retiring, here are the April webinars of potential interest on the UC retirement programs:

Preparing for Retirement

For UCRP members who are planning to retire within the next five years including active members and vested inactive members of UCRP. Webinar will cover topics such as understanding UCRP pension benefits, retirement savings and retiree health coverage.

Date: Tuesday, April 2, 2024

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

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The UC Retirement Process – From Start to Finish

For UCRP members who are planning to retire within the next 4-12 months. Webinar will explain everything you need to know about the retirement process, including required forms, important deadlines and helpful resources.

Date: Wednesday, April 17, 2024

Time: 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

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Retiree Health Benefits

This webinar is intended for those considering retirement from UC within the next 4-12 months. Webinar will review in detail the eligibility rules for retiree health coverage, your health plan options including Medicare coordination, how to determine your premiums and commonly asked questions.

Date: Thursday, April 25, 2024

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

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Sign-ups at <https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/compensation-and-benefits/retirement-benefits/preparing-for-retirement-presentation/index.html>.

Another Acquisition Completed

Sunday, March 31, 2024



UCLA has been buying properties all around the LA area. Here is the latest - which, as we noted in January, was approved by the Regents at that time:*

UCLA Health has acquired the 260-bed West Hills Hospital and Medical Center and related assets from HCA Healthcare. The transaction, which was finalized on March 28, will help address hospital inpatient capacity needs, allowing UCLA Health to provide world-class care to more patients across the region. The hospital has been renamed UCLA West Valley Medical Center.

“UCLA Health is focused on enhancing timely and equitable access to health care throughout greater Los Angeles, and this acquisition is an important milestone in our ongoing efforts,” said Johnese Spisso, president of UCLA Health and CEO of the UCLA Hospital System. “We are pleased to welcome West Hills staff members as UCLA Health employees as we work together to serve the community. I thank HCA Healthcare leaders for their efforts in completing this transaction with us.”

UCLA Health’s immediate priority during the ownership transition is ensuring continuity of high-quality care for patients and a smooth transition as the hospital’s operations are integrated with UCLA Health. UCLA Health has retained the vast majority of health care professionals and support staff previously employed by HCA Healthcare at West Hills.

The acquisition includes a 260-bed community hospital with seven operating rooms and a free-standing ambulatory surgery center in the west San Fernando Valley, about 21 miles northwest of UCLA’s main campus in the Westwood area of Los Angeles. The hospital sits on a 14-acre site, providing future opportunities to expand care. UCLA Health operates primary and specialty care clinics in and near the San Fernando Valley and across Southern California and the Central Coast...

Full news release at <https://newsroom.ucla.edu/releases/ucla-health-acquires-west-hills-hospital-and-medical-center>.

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* <https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/01/in-case-you-were-wondering.html>.



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